

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

OCTOBER
1926



EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY

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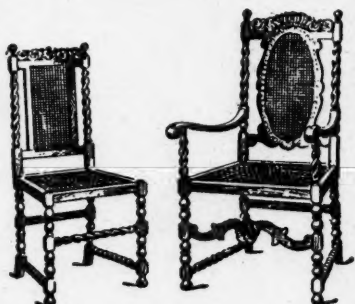


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BOOK NOTES FOR OCTOBER

Conclusive Evidence

IT was generally anticipated that the appearance of P. C. Wren's new novel, *Beau Sabreur*, would tend to diminish the sales of *Beau Geste*. This, however, is far from being the case. On the contrary, it seems that the publication of *Beau Sabreur* has had the opposite effect, for *Beau Geste* is selling in greater numbers now than at any period of its long life. This would appear to justify the critic's claim that *Beau Geste* is the 'mystery and adventure story of a generation.'



'Secret and Confidential'

THIS somewhat startling title, which Brig.-General W. H. H. Waters, C.M.G., C.V.O., has chosen for his memoirs, though apt, may require a little elucidation. Various titles were thought of, but all seemed flaccid until, by a happy inspiration, 'Secret and Confidential' was suggested as being the usual expression and the best summing-up of a military attaché's work. It is not, of course, employed in any way to denote indiscretion, but simply because the passage of time makes it not only possible but even, from an historical standpoint, advisable to make public what once was private. The author held, in addition to many other important positions, that of military attaché in Russia and Germany at a time when tension was high, and his many interesting and unique experiences brought him into intimate touch with Kings and Emperors, Ambassadors, Foreign Ministers, and even political prisoners in Siberia.

Beauty is Truth—Truth, Beauty

LOD GORELL's conception of life has that indefinable quality which can be but inadequately described as beautiful. He has already made for himself an enduring place among modern poets, and *Many Mansions*, his new volume, reveals afresh the seeing eye and a soul irradiated with high faith and purpose. The lyrics are as diverse in theme as they are alike in beauty of expression, and in the longest poem of the book—a presentation of the Supreme Motherhood—the poet's imagination rises to its highest level of power.

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BOOK NOTES FOR OCTOBER

An Illustrated Edition

MRS. L. ALLEN HARKER's readers will be delighted to learn that at long last an illustrated edition of her masterpiece, *Miss Esperance and Mr. Wycherly*, is in an advance stage of preparation. The numerous illustrations have been drawn by Sybil Tawse, and include a full-page coloured frontispiece. Artistically and tastefully designed, the book, it is hoped, will be found worthy of the story which the *Daily Telegraph* has described as 'pure gold.'

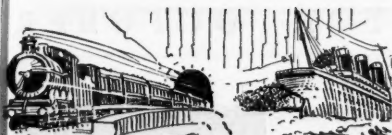


Wren Fever

THE tremendous success of *Beau Geste* and *Beau Sabreur* has created such a keen demand for the writings of P. C. Wren that it has been decided to republish his earlier works. The first two volumes to be thus reissued are *The Snake and the Sword* and *Father Gregory*, and these will be followed by *Dew and Mildew* and *Driftwood Spars*. Although they do not deal with the Foreign Legion, admirers of *Beau Geste* will find much to intrigue them in these volumes. The scene of them all is laid in India.

Empress of India

THE aim of Lord Ellenborough when Governor-General of India was to fix the British Government in the hearts of the Princes, Chiefs, and people of that Empire, and it has been averred that his term of office marked the turning-point in Indian history. It was he who first suggested the assumption by Queen Victoria of the Imperial title, and also the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. Sir Algernon Law, in his book on *India under Lord Ellenborough, March 1842-June 1844*, reveals the true significance of this period, and his selection of his subject's hitherto unpublished papers and despatches—including Lord Ellenborough's letter to the Secret Committee explaining his Proclamation to all the classes of the population of India—makes a real addition to Indian history.



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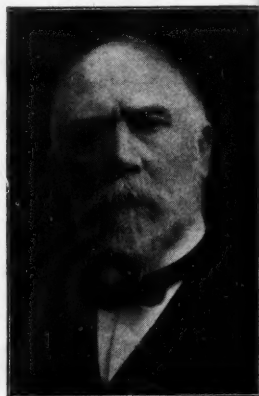
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BOOK NOTES FOR OCTOBER

A Prophet

'A PROPHET is not without honour save in his own—*profession*,' particularly when the profession happens to be the medical profession and the prophet an obscure general practitioner. The truth of this came home to Sir James Mackenzie very poignantly when the sight of suffering from heart diseases stirred him to begin intensive research into their causes, with the result that after ten years he came upon what was a great revelation of truth in that particular region. The men of Germany, America, and of other foreign countries who were truly interested in the Doctor's discoveries welcomed him with the honour he deserved, but the giants of Harley Street slept until the medical men from overseas brought him summarily to their notice. The whole of Sir James Mackenzie's fascinating life-record and the vicissitudes of his work are told in a most human story by Mr. R. MacNair Wilson, a former pupil. He entitles his book *The Beloved Physician*—the name by which Sir James Mackenzie was known to the common folk of Burnley who were his patients in the early days, and who first supplied the incentive to his specialised work.



'Words with a Past'

PROFESSOR WEEKLEY, the author of *The Romance of Words*, has written a new volume in which he gives almost complete biographies of a certain number of words whose history, from the point of view of origin, has been unusually adventurous—words, in fact, which may be said to have had a 'past.' Sometimes the main interest is etymological; at other times the Professor has tried to establish an origin for words which the *Oxford Dictionary* leaves unsolved; and often he attempts to summarise in simple form facts in word-history which have some novelty for the layman. The title of the book is *Words Ancient and Modern*.

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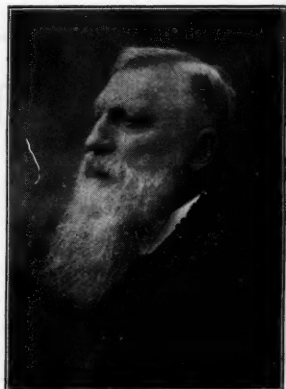
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BOOK NOTES FOR OCTOBER

Genius

A MAN of genius is a proverbially difficult person to live with, even when the association is on terms of equality. It is therefore a great tribute to Mr. Anthony Ludovici—artist and author himself—that he was able so to subdue his own personality as to enable him to fulfil the duties of private secretary to the famous sculptor, Auguste Rodin, over a period of nearly seven months. During this time Mr. Ludovici was privileged to hear the great man's discussions on modern art and on the developments of modern



civilisation as well as on current topics. The intimate and personal note which sounds through the book is evidence of the writer's close association and sympathy with the great sculptor. Yet this fact does not blunt the edge of Mr. Ludovici's frank judgment. The result is a trenchant and valuable summary of the personality and temper of one whose immense services to art, particularly to sculpture, can never be forgotten while our civilisation survives.

Concentration

THERE is a comforting adage often to be heard on the lips of homely people to the effect that 'when God shuts a door He opens a window.' Like many words which come from simple folk, they contain a profound truth which is demonstrated in the case of a writer who sends from her sick-bed a fresh, stimulating book revealing a keen insight into the movements of modern times. Thoughts and impressions, grave and gay, are skilfully blended and set forth by this acute observer, while two young relatives, with decided opinions of their own, supply many happy interludes to her volume *From the Pillow*.

Post-War Moscow

IN a novel 'the story's the thing'; nevertheless a good background and style enrich it tremendously for the appreciative fiction reader. Miss Nankivell chose the title for her first novel, *The Fourteen Thumbs of St. Peter*, from one of the many exhibits in the atheistic section of a Russian 'Wembley' held in 1923. In

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BOOK NOTES FOR OCTOBER

addition to the saint's fourteen thumbs there were in the collection several cases of Christ's winding-sheet, and hearts and shin-bones of the saints collected from the churches throughout Russia. Alas for the credulity of peasant folk—although perhaps suspicious people are even worse! The author has written a powerful tale of unusual character in which is revealed post-war Moscow and Communism in practice.

Anecdotal

As an interlude to the more serious volumes of biography and reminiscences, a book of incidents and episodes recording the events of an interesting life is always appreciated. This is what Major-General Sir Leopold Swaine has given us in his volume, *Camp and Court in a Soldier's Life*: it does not profess to be in any way a formal autobiography. The General has been the intimate friend of Emperor William II, he knew Prince Bismarck and Count Moltke, and he has anecdotes to tell of Prince Gortschakoff, Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone, and many other notable British men.

Competition Result

THE number of entrants for the *Sheaves from the Cornhill* Competition was quite up to expectations, and the task of deciding the order of the stories, according to the general opinion, a laborious one. The voting throughout was very consistent, and it was only by a very narrow margin indeed that *Desolate Houses* was awarded first place. Similarly *The Assisted Pilgrim* gained second place by the merest fraction. The final order of the stories and the list of successful competitors to whom the prizes have been sent are announced on p. 3 of Cover.

Next Month

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for November will contain, among other contributions, a further instalment of *The Winds of March*, by Halliwell Sutcliffe; the completion of *Makiké*, by Major Hubert Young, C.M.G., D.S.O., and of *A New Sheaf of Letters from Jane Welsh Carlyle*, by Leonard Huxley; *Anthony Trollope and His Mother*, by Rowland Grey; *Beyond the North-West Frontier*, by Gilfrid Hartley.

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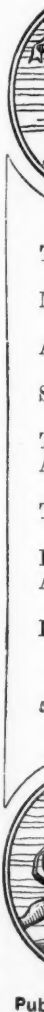
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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1926.

THE WINDS OF MARCH.

BY HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.

BOOK I.—STORRITH.

CHAPTER V.

LANTY WATER.

THE Storrith country—wide-flung from moor to moor, from barren fells to hollows where the farmers' homesteads nestled—had gone its way for many a year without grim tragedy. Such times come, as if peace could last for ever, without more disturbance than the usual rain at hay-harvest, and the droughts when wet is needed.

And now rumour was abroad that a foul deed had been done, on the high sandy road that climbed and dipped across the highlands. News of it reached Scroope when he came home after his day's shooting up the moor with Rob Blamire; and his ready optimism challenged the tidings at once.

Mrs. Merrilees, his housekeeper, met him with the news as soon as he crossed the threshold.

'There's been terrible doings out at Uplaw Moss, sir.'

'Well, the Moss is nine miles off, after all. What has happened?'

'Murder, they say.'

Roger was incredulous. Mrs. Merrilees had discovered so many mare's-nests in her time. 'Murder? I'll not believe it. Gossip heard somebody had fainted at the roadside—a poor rogue of a tramp, likely, who'd had no food for days. Then gossip went a mile, and sure the man was dead—and at the next milestone he'd been murdered.'

'It was Merrilees that brought the news, sir. He's not one to believe anything if he can help—and how any of us will dare go out of doors again, I can't tell you. And house-walls will be none too safe, either.'

Scroope laughed at her fears with impatient good-nature, and it was only when he went out, after the evening meal, into the rich glory of the autumn sunset that his unbelief was checked. As he

crossed to the kennels, to see how the litter of spaniel pups was doing, he found Merrilees, his man-of-all-work, in the stable-yard.

‘What is all this tale of your wife’s, Merrilees?’ he asked bluntly.

‘About the murder? It’s a bit too true for my liking.’

Merrilees told him the way of it then, in a brief, hard fashion that brought the tragedy into plain view, as if they had stood last night on Uplaw Moss itself. Away there on the Moss, where the road went between the heather and the marshes, they had found a man sprawled across the highway. He was gashed by many knife wounds, and his pockets, stuffed with money, were not rifled of their store. A shepherd, bringing his flocks to the lowlands by flood light of the moon, had seen a thin little man scamper up to meet him, and leap aside into the moor. Afterwards his sheep had stopped in dismay, and bleated as if all the world were lost. And then he came on the traveller, dead in the sandy road.

‘So it’s true?’ said Scroope, rousing himself from the chill that had crossed his sanguine joy in life.

‘Yes, it’s true. I’d like to think otherwise.’

Scroope’s mood swung back to the light answer he had given the stranger in Pallins churchyard when the clock had added a stroke to its midnight chime—to the same answer, when he had seen a woman lift her face to his from the ravine below Tring’s silent hamlet.

‘Uplaw Moss is a far stride, as I told your wife just now. What has this to do with us?’

‘Nothing at all—except that murder has a creepy-creep sort of way with it that travels far.’

Merrilees spoke a true word, as Scroope learned on the next day. Business took him to an outlying house of his, and he had to rein up constantly to discuss the thing that had happened on Uplaw Moss. Burly farmers—horsed, like himself—halted for awed gossip. A woman on foot, scared to the marrow, took comfort when he laughed away her superstition that murders never went singly, but in threes. The grim details of the tragedy, its suddenness, had changed their wind-swept roads of freedom into something sinister, threaded by the stealthy feet of dread.

He shook off the trouble, and rode down the slack of the road to Pallins Kirk, and on through Tring Hamlet. A kingfisher, perched on the ruined sluice-gate, flashed up-stream at his approach, with the vivid sheen of blue that always startled him.

As he went down the steep track bordering the ravine, smoke was rising from the cottage that once had been lived in by Jake

Middlemass. *She* was still there, then—the woman in distress sought for by a lean little man he abhorred by instinct. He felt a pang of disappointment when a halt on the roadway brought him no glimpse of the stranger in the ghyll below.

Scroope's thoughts were full of her as he rode down the track that hovered, slippery and wet, on the brink of the ravine's sheer fall. That picture of her solitude, shared only by a puppy biting at her skirts in frolic, returned persistently—and, with it, the question what had brought her into this wilderness.

A wilderness it was, indeed, to those not cradled in its life. The stream brawled through its rocky ghyll, and reached the level flats below to lose itself in a lake so still and brooding that it baffled the keen sunlight, the blaze of heather that ran from the gaunt hill-tops to its margin. Only the fir spinneys, perched here and there along the rises, were in accord with Lanty Water. They, too, yielded little to the sunlit warmth, in spite of the burnished sheen across their branches.

Scroope, as he rode slowly forward, was not troubled by the lake's eerie stillness. Lanty Water was too old a friend for that. Legends, he knew, had gathered round it by the score. One of these tales said that no fish could live in its haunted depths; but he had played many a good trout and brought it safe to bank. Country lore had it, too, that it was an ill place to linger by when dusk was falling. He had found only the keen allurements of watching, at that hour, for the wild duck to come.

Lanty Water meant more to him than its fish and wild-fowl. When he had travelled half the lake's long margin, a grey old house looked down at him; and every window was a friendly eye. Not too big or small for comfort, stout built and trim, it stood on a rising knoll, with green brackens and red heather for its garden.

The house had no trees about it, except gaunt, ancient thorns, whose branches swept flat and low toward the east. The western gales had shaped them from childhood with ruthless fury; but they survived, and stood now so thick with crimson berries that their leaves were hidden.

Gayle House had been his mother's once, and had come to him, a legacy small enough compared with the rich heritage his father had passed on; but he had a liking for the place. Some of the old furniture was there, faded and out of date. For the rest it was furnished as a house of call, to which he came when the mood took him to shoot its strip of moorland, or to fish Lanty Water.

His business there to-day was to see what damage last week's

tempest had done. Word had been sent to Storrieth that half the roof-stones were ripped away; and Will Merrilees came out to meet him as he reached the house. Merrilees was his gamekeeper, cousin to the man-of-all-work up at Storrieth, and lived in the cottage that stood in Gayle's little stable-yard.

'Every day I hoped you'd come, sir, and every day I've watched,' he protested.

Scroope glanced at the house. Half a chimney-stack was missing, and four or five of the heavy roof-slabs lay on the ground where they had fallen.

'I had your news, Will, and believed a quarter of it, as usual. Gayle is still standing, after all.'

'But if a second storm gets up, like t'other? It'll find some rare openings, and rip under what roof's left. The whole top of Gayle will be dinged away.'

'It's always well to look on the dark side.'

'I won't have you banter me. To let a house go to rack and ruin, when one man and a ladder could set it all to rights—it doesn't bear thinking of.'

'Why did you wait, Merrilees? You were here, and this ladder in the stable.'

'I hadn't your orders—and, besides, we see too little of you at this end of Storrieth lands.'

'How long will it take to get the house to rights? I want to come here soon.'

'A couple of days might see it shipshape—though I wouldn't promise. And after that there'll be the fires to kindle. Gayle's wet from floor to roof after that storm, and it's lucky there's pine logs in the wood-house.'

'What are the grouse doing on this side of the moor, Will?'

'Not so well, and not so badly. There was a moil of wet in the breeding season, as you know. Young broods were drowned; but what are left are stronger for the thinning out. There's always compensation, as Timothy the woodman said, when he fell into a bed of nettles one dark night. It might have happened to be a hive of bees instead.'

Merrilees talked of the partridge broods about the pastures, of the grey old fox who had his lair on Gayle Moor—a fox so wise and silent in his marauding, so skilled in hiding afterwards, that none could get at him.

'We'll get him one day,' said Scroope. 'He's a long score to settle—lambs in spring, year after year—'

'A murderer, as you might say,' broke in Merrilees, an awed note in his voice. 'And, talking of that, what's all this they're telling of a man found dead on the road, away beyond Storrieth yonder?'

'A shepherd found him, as I had the tale—found him knifed to death.'

'Ay.' And didn't the shepherd see a slim little fellow run out to the moors? Ill news goes at a gallop, and that's what we heard in Tring.'

Scroope nodded. This recurring tale of murder was beginning to disturb his easy outlook upon life.

'It happened nine miles beyond Storrieth. They must look to their own concerns, Merrilees.'

'That's right enough, sir; but I've something on my mind. The day of the murder, a queer little man was up and down among us. He came to Gayle here, and said he was searching for some woman or other. He went away with a flea in his lug. I knew little about women, I told him, and never meant to. I was wedded to a peaceful life.'

Scroope smiled. His gamekeeper was always the same—shrewd, hard of mind and body, with a humour brisk and nipping as a frosty day.

'He hurried from farm to farm,' Merrilees went on, 'as if he couldn't rest. And at every door he asked just the one question. Had they seen a girl, not tall or little, but of middling height—a girl with brown hair and a slender shape?'

'He asked me the same sort of question in Pallins churchyard.'

'Did he now?' said the other, with sharp interest.

'I'd forgotten it. He was little and shifty-eyed, and asked me about a woman in distress.'

'It's the same rascal. Shifty-eyed and restless—a man you'd like to wallop at sight, for what he'd done or was going to do. What was the last you saw of him?'

'He went up-fell, humming a tune.'

Merrilees filled his pipe slowly, as he glanced at Scroope. 'The queer thing is that Jake's cottage has a new tenant. I'm used to having Gayle and the neighbourhood to myself, and I didn't like to see that other chimney awake again. You never know what new-comers are—trash, as likely as not.'

'Well?' asked Scroope, breaking the other's stubborn silence.

'I'd pictured some rough devil of a man living in Jake's cottage—and *she* met me on the road—all of a sudden, taking my breath

away. Her hair was brown, and her shape slight as a reed. There wasn't a doubt who the stranger had been seeking—and he had missed her by no further than from here to Tring.'

'Who is she, Merrilees?'

'I know no more than you do. She looked frightened, and a sight too good for that jackanapes who wanted her. I've not seen her since.'

Scroope, as he rode home that afternoon along the edge of Lanty Water, grew impatient. He could not get his thoughts away from the fugitive who was living in the gorge. It was his gospel to let neither man nor woman trouble him unduly; and now his whole mind was busy with surmise. He was sorry, too, for a girl so utterly forlorn—uncomfortably sorry.

A breeze stirred Lanty Water. It got up, as these little winds were apt to do, from the middle of the lake; and it was cold. The hot sunlight began to draw wreaths of mist across the rippling wavelets, till the sky was hidden. Scroope and his horse were fleeced by a grey mantle.

'Steady, lad,' said the master. 'We should know Lanty's tricks by now.'

They went slowly through the clinging cold. Above them was broken ground. Below, the lake's treacherous edge waited for a false stride. Water and lake alike were hidden by the curling mist.

'Steady, lad,' muttered Scroope once more.

As they made their way, step by cautious step, a woman loomed ghost-like into view—so close that Scroope almost rode her down. She stood there, turning for flight, yet helpless in the mist.

'I startled you?' said Scroope.

'Yes, but that is over. I—I am not frightened now.'

He knew then that her terror—scarcely conquered yet—had little to do with the sudden danger. Her relief sprang, not from the narrow escape from his horse, but from a deeper sense of rescue. Her friendly glance was not for himself, except that he happened not to be the one man she dreaded.

'You were feeling your way through the mist,' he said with rough sympathy. 'I'll guide you home.'

'Home?' she echoed.

That was all. Irony, loneliness, fighting down its need of tears, were instinct in the word.

He reached down and touched her on the arm. 'Take my stirrup. We'll blunder through somehow.'

She obeyed, as a tired child might ; and together they went, the three of them, along the brink of Lanty. The lap-lap of greedy waters sounded close on their right. Twice the horse stumbled on the shelving track, and the master plucked him from disaster. Then Scroope let him 'sense' the way again.

The girl at his stirrup gave no sign of panic. Perhaps she did not know how near danger lay ; or, perhaps, knowing, she counted it slight compared with harsher perils.

'We're nearly past the water,' said Scroope at last.

'How can you tell ? There's no break in the mist,' she answered fretfully.

'By the noise of Ryther Burn,' he snapped, and gave his whole mind again to the task of winning through.

The worst of this adventure lay just ahead. Horse and rider were aware of the place where the road began to climb. The right-hand border, a gently shelving bank till now, became a steep and steeper precipice of rocks and pebbles. A wayward step on that side of the track meant headlong death.

Knowing this, Scroope and the horse warned themselves at the fire of peril. It was a battle between flesh and blood and the mists of Lanty Water.

There was no speed about the strife. Step by cautious step, they made their footing. Now they would halt for a moment, bewildered as to which was the right or the safe left-hand of the road. Then they crept forward again, till the mists began to flow and eddy, letting stray gleams of sunlight through.

The mists grew tattered as they climbed, the warm light nearer. It would have been easier if the track had been hidden to the last ; but suddenly, at the steepest of the journey, they came into full sun-glare that showed them the little space between the gorge and safety. They halted on the brink, the horse as dizzy as his rider. Then Scroope plucked sharply at the bridle, and dragged the three of them to safety.

They stood panting on the heights. Lanty Water, below, lay shrouded in a pall of her own weaving. Here was clean warmth, and bees among the crimson heather.

Scroope glanced down. The girl had left his stirrup, and was standing near, mist rain beaded round her cloak in all the colours of the rainbow. Her brown hair was greyed here and there by crisps of wrinkled vapour. And in her eyes, as they met Scroope's, was the joy of battle.

Then she thanked him, and set foot on the rock-stair that stepped crazily to the ravine below. He watched her passage down—watched her cross Ryther Burn by way of the little stone bridge—saw her open the cottage door and let out a puppy riotous with welcome.

It was no concern of his, but the old question rode home with him for company. Why was she in hiding from any sort of rogue ?

CHAPTER VI.

TEMPEST.

STEPHEN ELLIOT, hobbling down the lane outside his house near dusk, encountered Mrs. Daunt as she trudged home with a basket of kindling-wood on her arm.

'You're bitter against the Scroopes,' he said, returning to their talk of three days ago as if nothing else had been in his thoughts since then.

'I've need to be. You may remember what I looked like, Mr. Elliot, when I was seventeen ? The lads buzzed round me like bees in a clover patch.'

The old man nodded impatiently. 'Yes, you were pretty enough in those days.'

'So Roger Scroope's father thought, and a little fool I was to listen to him. And all the moorside will tell you that Wee Daunt came from the foolishness. Why shouldn't I be bitter ?'

'I never got the pieces of that old tale together. Somebody told me—it all comes back now—that you'd gone from your cottage, the same wild night my girl went. I was too crazy to pay heed, or care what had happened to Eliza Daunt.'

'Like Scroope himself,' put in the other grimly. 'What happened to me was that your girl ran through the storm to my cottage with her tale. She must get away to shelter—anywhere, as long as it was far enough from home. I'd hated her till then, because she'd taken Scroope from me ; but all of a sudden the hate turned on him instead.'

Mrs. Daunt stood far off from that night of havoc. Its emotions had grown cold, clear-shaped. The years of dripping water had hardened them to stone.

'Tell me more,' said Elliot, eager in some strange, half-wistful way to retrace his daughter's journey.

'She daren't face the night alone, she told me. Would I go with her? Little she guessed that we'd shared Scroope, me and she. It was pitiful. So, having nothing to lose myself except an aching tooth—Lord, how it raged when we got out into the wind—I locked my door, and tucked her arm in mine, and we set off.'

'And Scroope lay snug abed,' muttered Elliot, hugging his old grievance.

'I warrant he did.—As I was saying, we took our ways through a wind that skelped the flesh from your bones. Sometimes it rained, and sometimes the sleet drove like a pack o' furies. Then we came to a barn, with the door ajar luckily, and crept in among the hay.'

'Such a night as it was! I can't bear even now to think of her facing such a storm.'

'She came to her birth-pains that night. She knew she hadn't long to live, and bade me see to the baby. What else could I do but promise? Then she fell into a fitter about her marriage-lines. She'd forgotten them in her hurry, it seemed, and was trying to tell me where to find the bit o' paper when she fell back among the hay.'

'Why did you never speak of this?' asked Elliot harshly. 'We've been neighbours all these years,—and you kept a still tongue, till you found me at the Cursing Well.'

'I daren't name your girl to you. Nobody dared. It drove you crazy to have it whispered even.'

'True. Yes, that's true enough. Go on, Eliza Daunt.'

'The farmer came to his barn next morning, and found three folk among his hay—two of us quick, and t'other dead. So he took the whole puzzle to his wife, as men do. She happened to be of the motherly sort, and nothing was too much to do for the foundling, from that time forward.'

'How long is it since you found me at the well, setting my curse on the Scroopes?' asked Elliot, groping with his sticks as if he stood on unfirm ground.

'Two or three days,' she answered, watching him with her shrewd, cold eyes.

'It seems longer—half a lifetime longer. You told me, at the Well there—that her child was a boy. And he lived, you said. And now you say she had left her marriage-lines. Was Scroope honest with her, after all?'

'I'm not sure, either way. She was dying, and knew it; and

a woman might tell lies at such a time. If it cost her hell and torment in the place she went to, she'd lie to prove her child no bastard.'

'So you're giving hope with one hand——'

'And snatching it back with t'other. I'm only like life, as I've known it.'

Hard and bitter, she mocked Elliot's softening mood.

'If it were true!' he said, still probing restlessly with his stick into an undreamed-of land. 'The boy's a man by now, wherever he is, and I've a grandson—born in wedlock. I'll believe no less.'

'If you can prove it. High and low I've gone about the moors, till a looker-on would have fancied I'd grown prayerful in my latter days.'

'Prayerful?'

'I've been to every church within ten miles, one time and another, and picked my way through the registers. I never found what I wanted.'

'So you had your pains for nothing.'

'Not exactly. After a long while I chanced on an old body who came from a place called Culloth, away off in the Norbrigg country. Her sister, since dead, had been witness to a runaway marriage many a year back. The sister had gossiped about it so often that the bridegroom's name had stuck. The name was Scroope, and so I went to Culloth.'

Elliot, fidgety and excited, resented the slowness of her tale. 'What did you find there, woman?'

'Don't *woman* me,' said Mrs. Daunt, with tart reproof—'and don't try to hurry Eliza Daunt. I've worn a deal of shoe-leather and patience in what you might call church-work.'

'Take your own time,' grumbled Elliot, acknowledging the grim jest.

'I went to Culloth—a prettyish place, snug in a fold of the moor. And I asked for the church. They showed me all that was left of it—a few blackened piles of stone. There'd been a fire there the week before I came. Luck's a queer thing, Mr. Elliot, and her marriage-lines are lost both ways, it seems.'

Elliot would not let his new dream go. Somewhere he had a grandson living, heir to Storrieth. After all these years of patient hate, he could drag Roger Scroope from his house and give his pride a fall. And the whole moorside would learn that his girl had been a wife, and not a light-o'-love.* His wits grew sharp.

'We can find proof of the marriage,' he said, stammering with his sticks again in his excitement.

'I'd hoped as much. You know more of the world than me.'

'They were married at Culloth? I know the place, as it happens, and the Registrar's office is at Norbrigg.'

'The Registrar's?'

'He'll have a copy—and if,' went on Elliot, with rasping humour, '*his* house has been burned, too, there's a place known as Somerset House, in London, where they keep such records. I'll get into my gig to-morrow, and my man will drive me over the tops to Norbrigg.'

'If you find what we want,' said Eliza Daunt, 'you'll not make it easy for Roger Scroope, when it comes to the going-out?'

'No,' said Elliot, 'I'll make it hard as the nether millstone—for what his father did to that girl of mine. Married or no, he let her die in a wayside barn, while he lay snug. He's past my reach by now; but I'll teach his son to limp it in the open.'

Scroope's son, as it happened, was at Moor House just then, his thoughts far away from any brewing enmity. Rob Blamire had left Jess and himself in the cosy fireglow of the long, low-raftered 'parlour'—it kept the old-fashioned title still—and Scroope was content enough.

Through the mullioned windows he watched the storm-red sun flame to his sleep below the greying moor. Rob and he had only just returned from a gallop over the road yonder that glistened, a wet ribbon winding in and out among the heather. His body still ached, and the pleasant stiffness was a reminder of one more good ride that he had shared with Blamire.

His glance returned to Jess. The wood-flame flickered and shone by turns on her quiet figure, as she sat watching pictures in the fire.

The thought came to him that Storrieth, after all, was an empty sort of house. If his own hearth had a trim little woman to share its other side, it would be complete. There would be somebody to welcome him, too—as Jess had done not long since—when he came home from riding up the moor. He, too, was seeing pictures, softened by the glow of fancy.

'Rob would be lonely if you left him?' he asked, scarcely knowing that the words were out.

She answered only by a glance that drew him to her side.

'If you came to Storrieth, Jess?' he said impatiently.

'It would be coming home.'

The softness of her voice, the frank confession, took Scroope by storm. He stooped and kissed her.

'Home? Storrieth would be home?'

'That's been my dream, since we were boy and girl together. You make me tell you.'

Rob blundered in, with a smell of out-of-doors about him; but this time his sister showed no sign of resentment. He had intruded too late to spoil Scroope's yielding mood. All she had hoped for was hers at last.

'We've had the best of the weather, Scroope,' he said—a little boisterously, to hide what a shrewd glance at them both had told him. 'The wind's piping down Hither Clough, and the storm-cocks have gone wild.'

Scroope knew that these two weather-signs, coming together, were trusty prophets. 'I'd best be getting home, before the storm breaks.'

'You'd best stay the night here. Where's the use of going back to your draughty wilderness of a house, with nobody but Merrilees and his wife to talk to?'

'Yes, stay,' said Jess, with a new care for his safety that was strange and pleasant to Scroope. 'Storrieth isn't a wilderness—but why should you get wet to the bone in reaching it?'

'Of course I'll stay,' he said, forgetting a dozen matters waiting for him there at Storrieth—matters that had seemed urgent until now.

The red light in the west had gone from the moor. The window showed only a grey haze, forlorn and cold, that crept over rise and hollow. The wind's piping was shrill and near, and the wood-smoke came from the hearth in pungent drifts and eddies. The spinny sheltering Moor House sent out a sudden clamour.

It was a wild, harsh battle-cry; and, knowing his ways, these three saw, as if he were not hidden by the misty dusk outside, the storm-cock swaying on a topmost branch of some good tree. Slim as he was, there was only one thing that he loved better than promise of tempest soon to come—and that was the storm itself when it broke about him and his feathers stiffened to the onset like a coat of mail.

'He's a bird to my liking,' said Rob. 'He stands up to the weather like a man.'

Then, by and by, what with the wind's eerie crying and the

night's unrest, Blamire's thoughts ran back to news they had heard earlier in the day.

'They've caught the murderer, Jess,' he said.

Quiet and self-contained as she was, the girl glanced up with eager question. She, like her neighbours, had been inclined to start at shadows, since a dead man was found on the highway with many knife-wounds on the body.

'We pulled up at Lingtop Inn for a draught of ale on our way home, and heard the tale there. The hue-and-cry was up, and they found a littleish, shifty sort of man, with blood on his clothes and his face mauled about. He's in Caisterby gaol now.'

The wind was rattling at the casement—not with tapping fingers but in harsh gusts. The crackling wood-fire showed the black night outside and the sleet-rain running down the window-panes in mimic flood.

'A good night to be indoors, Scroope,' laughed Rob. 'Where would you have been, caught between this and Storrieth ?'

'I should have been thinking of Jess, to keep me weatherproof.'

She welcomed the ready answer with a glance of soft approval. Already she had taught a heedless man the way of speech.

'That may serve with lovers ; but give me a tight roof over my head, and plenty of cheer in the wine-cellar.'

The wind grew still. A silence strange and hard to bear lay on house and moor. It was the storm's waiting time, to gather breath.

Then a rumble sounded, far off, like the scattered roll of drums. Nearer the drummers came, and nearer. And then, without other warning, a fork of lightning zagged across the room, and thunder bellowed after it. Jess drew back, startled by the venomous nearness of the flash, and Scroope put a masterful arm about her. It was good to have someone to defend.

And now it seemed the house could not survive. Straight overhead the storm broke in crash and fury. Livid, barbed forks of flame were followed by crackle and roar of the thunder. The wind raved down the chimney-stack ; and in the little pauses of the din they heard the rain descend as if a second Flood had come.

Stillness followed, but not the sort of quiet a man could trust. The rain ceased. The thunder-wind harried its drummers out across the moor, till the grim tattoo died into silence.

'It was tough while it lasted,' said Blamire presently—'and now let's get to supper. I'm famished.'

They scarcely reached the hall before the wind returned, backing from east to west. The tap-tap of the drums came with it—returning, too—till the storm broke overhead again with redoubled tumult. In the wind-lulls they heard the crying, human almost, of tortured branches, the swish of ceaseless rain.

Through half that night the storm lasted, going and coming as if its heart were set on devouring the stout farmstead; and when Scroope got into saddle the next morning for his ride home to Storrieth, the front of Moor House was strewn with branches. Leaves were still raining down in the shrewd wind, and the sycamores showed half naked, though October was far off as yet.

'The house is standing, anyway,' said Blamire dryly. 'I doubted it once or twice when I was wakened by the din.'

'You'll take care, Roger?' murmured Jess, patting his horse's neck.

'Care of what?' he laughed. 'The storm's over.'

'Oh, of—of everything.'

Her voice, the soft pleading in her eyes, went to Scroope's heart like wine. It was good to have a trim lass anxious for his welfare, though her fears were idle.

'You'll be riding to Caisterby Market on Wednesday?' asked Rob. 'You'd better see that mare of Tarrant's. He wants to sell, and you want to buy. It's a pity to miss the chance.'

'I'll be there,' said Scroope. 'Tarrant puts a right one now and then among the wrong 'uns.'

With a whip-salute to them both and a cheery laugh, he took the upland way. The breeze was playful, till he got out of the hollow sheltering Moor House, and met the wind's father on the heights. It was keen and bitter with remembrance of last night's raking storm—a devil of a wind, as Roger explained the matter to his horse.

When they came near the top of the road he glanced by instinct at Lone Fir. . . . Its crest was leaning. . . . With a queer sickness, bred of lifelong superstition, he went up the rise. The tree, though its trunk was bent to the east, still clung to its deep-rooted heritage.

It was standing. Scroope drew a deep breath of thankfulness. He had realised, in a deep flash of intuition, what Storrieth meant—Storrieth with its old, grey walls—with all its ghosts, welcome because part of it. Lone Fir was only leaning. There were means and ways by which skilled workers could prop an ailing tree. He would bring his men up before the day was out.

Hope, bred of indolence, succoured him for his little moment. Then out of the moor's womb the wind came snarling once again. It grew from a cold, roving breeze to a gale in full-throated cry across the moor. And suddenly Lone Fir cried, too, in every tortured limb, and crashed to ground. Its splintered branches snapped as they fell, throwing up a rain of sodden peat.

Scroope's horse reared in panic, and all but threw him. The master's hand on the reins weakened, too, and then recovered grip.

Disaster faced him. Lone Fir was down at last, and tradition's gusty heritage blew keen about him. He remembered Stephen Elliot's spite, not many days since, when the crazed man spoke of the fir, and traced with his fingers the gnarled dents in its trunk.

'When Lone Fir goes, there's an end to Storrieth.'

The old tale beat into his heart, like the fret of a restless sea. If Storrieth went, his heart would go broken into some wilderness where no sun came up o' mornings, and no hope met the new day's adventures.

Tradition had him in its grip. Dizzied and appalled, he knew, for the first time in his life, what panic meant. The red blood in his veins was water. Nightmare dreads spun clammy webs about him.

He broke the spell, knowing he must. Some unknown trouble menaced him. The instinct to fight whatever came grew dominant, and almost gay. He looked at Lone Fir, its hollow trunk agape to the windy sunlight, and what he had said to old Stephen Elliot returned to mind. He was younger than Lone Fir.

His manhood found a keener edge than it had known till now. Whatever had to come, would come. His lean, whipcord body strengthened. He tightened his horse's reins, and went forward at the trot.

'It's home,' he said—'home to Storrieth.'

CHAPTER VII.

AT CAISTERBY.

SCROOPE was up early the next morning, in readiness for the journey into Caisterby. But ill news was earlier. Mrs. Merrilees, his house-keeper, crept into the room as he was breakfasting, and fidgeted with her black alpaca apron.

'They say Lone Fir's down, sir.'

'They're right for once. It fell yesterday, just as I rode by.'

'And you never told us—and ate a hearty meal when you came home?'

'I was hungry.'

'Well, it's not for me to mind, if you don't. But I should have thought you knew——'

'That the fir had to go, one of these near days? Of course I knew. Its trunk was as hollow as a drum.'

'So you've no care that Storrieth's going, too?'

'Yes,' said Scroope sharply. 'I've a care for Storrieth.'

She could make nothing of him in this mood of hard aloofness. The master seemed to be half a lifetime away from his usual self. So she fell to crying softly, wiping the tears away with a corner of her apron.

'If your poor mother was alive, sir, she'd be crying same as me.'

'Would she?' snapped Scroope, as he left the table. 'She was made of harder stuff.'

Her husband was clearing away the traces of last night's storm when Scroope went out into the hot August sunlight. And Merrilees, unlike his wife, said nothing at all. It was his way when feeling ran too deep.

'I know what you're thinking. Out with it, man,' grumbled Scroope, as impatient of silence as he had been of the wife's garrulity.

'Well, the fir had to go, one day or another. We all have. But that's small comfort. Shall I saddle your horse?'

'Yes—and, Merrilees, go to the Low Plantation while I'm away, and dig up a sapling fir. Don't spoil its roots.'

'It's no time for transplanting,' protested the other, wondering if the master had gone daft.

'It's the only time. Take a cart, and carry the sapling up to Lone Fir Hill. I shall be back from Caisterby in time to plant it.'

The man understood then. He brought the horse round, and watched Scroope mount and ride out into the steamy haze that was born of the sun's wedlock with last night's ceaseless down-pour. Then his wrinkled mouth creased into what with another man would have been a smile.

'He's carrying it well,' he muttered—'beginning as he means to go on, whatever comes to Storrieth.'

Scroope was not carrying it well at all, to his own view, as he rode to the four-lane-ends where Rob Blamire was waiting for him.

Do as he would, his mind returned, over and over again, to the haunting threat involved in the fir's downfall. . . . Blamire jarred on his mood, as they rode uphill and down together. The little that Rob said was full of sympathy, and Scroope wanted no opiate of that sort just now. He grew impatient of this acceptance by one and all that Storrieth's end was near, because there was one tree less about the countryside.

Caisterby's market-day was in full swing when they reached the town. The press of sheep and cattle in its narrow streets, the farmers and their barking dogs, steadied Scroope. All this pleasant uproar was from of old, and he a part of it. No debts hampered Storrieth. What need happen to his house, because an old wives' tale talked nonsense about Lone Fir?

By the time he had seen the mare that Tarrant had for sale, and had bought her, he had half forgotten superstition. Then a neighbour halted to pass the time of day, and asked if Blamire and he were going to the court-house.

'The magistrates—a full bench, too, they say—are trying the queer murder case from our part of the world. I'm on my way there, to see what's doing.'

They went with him, and edged their way into the crowded court-house. Scroope glanced at the magistrates, grave and decorous—at the police and the man they guarded. It was no surprise that the prisoner was the little, shift-faced stranger he had met in Pallins churchyard. What did astonish him was his keen interest as thread by thread the hangman's rope was being spun about the culprit. Why should he care either way what happened to this vagabond?

The shepherd whose flock would not go forward, because a dead body blocked the road, gave evidence with slow conviction. A thin little man had got up into the moonlight and run across the heather. He saw him clearly. Moonlight was tricky, to be sure; but he could swear that the prisoner and the runaway were 'as like as two peas in a pod.' Then other witnesses told how the prisoner had been worming his way up and down the moors, pretending he sought a woman in distress. They had not believed his tale, and had double-locked their doors after he had gone.

Then came the most damning evidence of all. The prisoner, when they captured him, had plainly been in trouble. His face was battered, his knuckles raw, and his clothes were stained with the red-rust of blood.

Again Scroope wondered at this interest that was something more. His easy good-humour was threaded through and through by something harsher. In spite of himself, he was glad to see the net closing so surely on a man he had no quarrel with. The magistrates could do no more than send him forward to the Assizes ; but the end seemed sure.

The prisoner, fighting for his life, made a stout defence. Alert and wiry, he stood there, telling the Court what had happened on the night when they found a dead body on the highlands. It was true, he told them, that he had been up and down the countryside in search of a woman in distress. He was seeking his wife. It was true that his face was bruised when they took him. It bore witness to as much, as they could see. But he had done no murder.

Scroope grew restless. The man was showing fight—fight against grim odds. There was conviction in his voice. He remembered the woman, guarded only by a puppy, who had stood in the moonlit ghyll at Tring and glanced up in terror as he stood on the brink above.

‘I was seeking my wife,’ went on the prisoner, ‘and came to a lonely churchyard. The country was foreign to me, and there’s only one man in it who can tell where I was that night.’

He turned to the shepherd who had happened on the dead man. ‘What time was it when you found the body?’ he asked sharply.

‘Twelve o’ midnight, or near thereby. I’d taken a look at my watch just before, by the light of a lucifer match, wondering how long I’d have to be out of my bed before I chanced on six missing sheep.’

‘And the body was warm?’

‘Ay. He’d not been dead very long. The smell o’ life stayed with him still.’

The Court was shaken out of its usual routine. What had seemed a foregone conclusion was now a duel between an old shepherd, honest and stubborn to the core, and a man who went in fear of death.

‘That was at midnight?’

‘I’ve told you so,’ said the shepherd—‘a minute or two on one side or t’other of the time. That watch of mine is as trusty as my dog.’

The prisoner turned to the Bench. There was nothing shifty about him now. His tale was plain and downright.

‘At twelve that night I was in a wayside churchyard. I couldn’t find it again, because I was lost and seeking my way in a strange country.’

'How did you know that it was twelve o'clock?' asked the Chairman of the Bench.

'Because the clock boomed out thirteen instead of twelve. It was a queer thing to happen. There was a stranger with me in the churchyard. He heard it, too, and he would be the only witness on my side. But it's not likely I shall ever find him. My luck's out.'

The onlookers, who had pushed their way in from curiosity, had been dead against the prisoner. Now their sympathy was stirred. They felt that he was speaking truth. And Scroope, who knew it, was bewildered by the suddenness of this appeal.

'Soon after I left the churchyard,' went on the little man, with a desperate bid for humour, 'I was sorry I'd jested with the stranger about the clock striking thirteen instead of twelve. Superstition had no terrors for me, I told him—and I'd scarcely left him a mile behind when I blundered with my face against a wall. It was in a dark spinny-corner where the moon couldn't shine.'

The magistrates themselves believed him now. His eloquence on his own behalf was terse, convincing. The most cunning rogue, they told themselves, could not have invented so odd a tale as this of a country church whose clock struck thirteen instead of twelve. Yet all the weight of evidence was against the prisoner. They had only his word for what had happened—and, by the look of him, his word did not stand for much.

Scroope, unwillingly enough, shouldered his way through the crowded Court. He had no wish to settle the issue in the prisoner's favour. Every instinct of repulsion he had felt at their first meeting gathered strength when he found himself in the witness box, giving the simple tale of the encounter. He could do no less; but it went hard against the grain. He shrank, too, from the gaping wonder of a crowd that had known him only as a hard rider and no fool when a bargain was to be made in open market.

He loathed this sham sort of publicity; and Rob Blamire, when all was over and they were out in the busy High Street again, glanced at him with dry sympathy.

'You didn't relish it,' he said; 'but take comfort. The hangman is bound to get him, sooner or later. He wears that sort of face.'

Scroope felt a touch on his arm. There beside him was the little man whose life, in all likelihood, he had saved from the gallows.

'You wouldn't go without a word of thanks?'

'I need none,' said Scroope brusquely.

The late prisoner was gay with the heady leap-back from peril narrowly averted. His thin, clean-shaven face was creased with devil-may-care, ironic merriment.

'So what's to be done with my gratitude? I've to get rid of it, and you won't take it. What's to be done with it?'

'That's your concern.'

'And the hangman will be my next, according to your friend here. Yes, I overheard his pleasant jest. And so good-day to you, and devil take you both.'

He was lost in the mob of farmers, sheep and cattle, inextricably mingled down the High Street's length, and Blamire turned from watching him.

'So much for your friend, Roger. Let's share a meal at "The Naked Man," and then be jogging home.'

The old-time inn—its signboard's meaning lost in the mists of other days—was full of hungry modern folk who greeted the newcomers with cheery welcome. Some of the farmers were for chattering of the part Scroope had lately played in court; but he would have none of it. He talked instead of crops and cattle, and got out to the stable-yard as soon as the meal was ended.

'You'd better ride home alone, Blamire,' he said. 'I'm taking a led horse with me, and it's slow going.'

'So you bought the mare for Jess? I guessed as much. Why not get a stable-boy to ride her over?'

'Because nobody gets to her saddle until Jess is ready.'

'Good. I was never in love myself, but I'd like to know the damned foolishness that's in your face just now. We'll jog together, Scroope.'

The moors, as they rode the bridle-tracks, were spendthrift with storms over and tempests soon to follow. Never a light had shown in August skies but was in the heavens now. Where threat of rain lay over the northward hills, great wastes of crimson and blue as deep as pansies' hearts ran in and out together. Westward, the red sun dipped down to heather-bloom on fire from end to end of the wild acres.

'There's going to be weather,' said Blamire dryly.

'Let it come. We'd never know the moor for our own, if she hadn't a temper now and then.'

Scroope was all eagerness, now they were near Moor House. He glanced from time to time at his new purchase. Jess, fond of

horseflesh and a good judge, could not fail to like the mare, and he was impatient to see her mounted for the first trial-gallop.

She was not to be found. The maidservant told them that her mistress had gone over to Mr. Elliot's. The old gentleman had taken a chill through going in a storm of wind and rain to see Lone Fir, and his life was despaired of, so they said.

Scroope himself took a chill as the maid prattled on, country fashion—a chill of the spirit, harder to meet than bodily ailment. Man-like, he had expected Jess to be waiting for him at whatever hour he chose to come. Disappointment was keen, after his journey with the led mare, and he was not used to thwartings; but that mood yielded to something deeper. The maid's awed glance at him as she spoke of Lone Fir—her talk of Stephen Elliot—all fed the ancient superstition of his race.

He knew why Elliot had hobbled out through the tempest to see the fir lying prone—knew that in his own heart the dirge of his house was sounding through time-old crannies that let bleak unfaith through. He did not know that new-born strength was his, urgent and keen to meet whatever had to come. Defeat was the only knowledge he was conscious of—that, and wonder that Jess was not beside him, to charm the bitterness away.

He saw that the mare was stabled safely, and declined Blamire's hospitality on the plea that he was needed at Storrieth.

'It's right that Jess should go to that old madman, Elliot,' said Rob, at a loss to understand the other's churlishness. 'He's rich, and her godfather; and times are none too good with any of us.'

'Times *are* devilish hard,' Scroope agreed curtly, as he swung himself into the saddle.

The wind was merry in his face as he crossed the uplands. His horse was in good fettle, glad to be free of his stride again after the irksome journey out from Caisterby. Such everyday matters once had been enough to lighten his worst moods; but now they failed him. It troubled him that Jess, knowing Stephen Elliot's enmity, should go to the old man at all. Surely her loyalty was his to claim, not Elliot's. If affection, or duty, had taken her to the sick man, he would have liked it better; but she had gone from prudence. Rob had blurted out that secret.

He loathed himself for the doubt; but it stayed with him. He despised the superstition that ran out to meet him as he passed Lone Fir, derelict and silent, its roots pointing like a gnarled giant's hand to the red evening skies. Yet superstition would not leave

him. *If Storrieth went.* Already he was trying to grapple with all that the loss would mean. He had not guessed how dear the old grey building was, and the sprawling clump of byres and stables that clustered thick about it.

Then Jess met him on the road. She came up from the glen that strode from Follyfoot Ghyll to the highway, and Scroope forgot his doubts as she came to his stirrup.

'You're mounted on a big horse, Roger--and poor little Cinderella goes on foot.'

'That's no fault of mine. I've left the bonniest mare in the dale at Manor House--if you care to have her.'

The girl flushed with pleasure. The only horse she owned was sedate and ageing, and Rob, though he constantly promised her another mount 'one day soon,' had been slack at the buying.

'She will be my very own? And she can go?'

'Try her,' said Scroope, looking down at the eager, upturned face. Her joy in receiving the present was manifest and open; and pleasure brought enticing dimples out.

'You'll forgive my going to old Mr. Elliot?' she said abruptly. 'I had to go, Roger, though he does hate you so. You see, I've been yours for so little a while--and his for so long.'

'You'll have to choose between us now, Jess.' His voice was sharp and masterful. 'The old fool caught his chill by going to see Lone Fir down.'

'He may die of it.'

'Not he. Hate will get him on to his feet again--lust of living, to gloat over the fir's downfall.'

'So you believe it, too?'

'The nonsense about Storrieth going with the landmark tree? Not I.'

'Yet deep in your heart?'

'Is you, Jess,' he broke in lightly.

Again the dimples showed. 'You've loved before, Roger? Yes, but you have. Nobody learns courtship just in a day or two.'

She left his stirrup, and went a pace or two up the road, and turned.

'Mr. Elliot frightened me to-day,' she said. 'He was so sure of Storrieth's end. And I pictured you without a roof over you--and all your pride gone--'

'Nightmare talk, Jess. The man's crazy.'

'Crazy enough. But he was so sure. He frightened me.'

There were no dimples now. Scroope, for a fleeting moment, saw harsh lines in a face that some east wind seemed to nip.

'If Storrieth went, there's Gayle. We could live there well enough, with what was left me.'

The pause was slight between his blunt answer to the girl's fears and her response; but to Scroope the silence seemed troublesome and long.

'There is Gayle,' she said. 'We could be happy there. But, Roger, the worst need not come. Tell me it will not come.'

'I'm no prophet, Jess. Do you want me to ride up to-morrow and set the pace for that new mare of yours?'

She glanced up and down the road, to see there were no onlookers. Then she beckoned his head down, and gave him her young, fresh lips to kiss.

'Yes, come,' she said. 'We'll have a gallop, Roger.'

For all her blandishment, and for all his will to feel the lover, Scroope rode with an empty heart to Storrieth. Jess had failed him somehow, or he had failed her by not understanding. He was not sure either way.

When he reached his own gate, Wee Daunt was leaning over it, his face towards the house. The dwarf did not hear the sound of hoofs until Scroope was close; when at last he turned, startled and ashamed, he seemed like one roused from long dreams.

Scroope had an old liking for the misshapen man. Pity was blended with admiration of Daunt's courage in face of a world unkind to him at birth, and since; and the dwarf gave him, in return, a fervid homage that he kept locked away in some deep corner of himself.

'What were you dreaming of?' asked Scroope, drawing rein as the other opened the gate for him.

'Lots of things—such as having been born different—straight up and down, as you might say, instead of broad as long.'

'What you want, laddie, is a day up the moor, with a gun under your arm. You're a better shot than I am.'

As always, Scroope found the right way of handling Wee Daunt. The dwarf's face was aglow with delight. Two things only he could do like other men. He did not know that he was brave in face of day-long impatience with himself for being what he was. But he did know that he could hold his own at guncraft.

'You gave me a day up-moor only last week,' he said, his big head cocked sideways with anticipation.

‘And you can have another to-morrow. I can’t be with you ; but you can bring a brace of grouse to Mrs. Merrilees. She’s needing them.’

Wee Daunt knew that the housekeeper had grouse enough in her larder. Scroope, as he’d known Storrieth’s owner, had been constantly the same. The grant of a day’s shooting carried no hint of favour. Somebody wanted birds that Scroope himself had no time to shoot—or rabbits were needed here and there among the cottagers—or could Daunt bring a few wild-duck to Storrieth ?

It had been the same with the gun that Scroope had given him, years and years ago—the gun that slept under Daunt’s bed o’ nights, with the cartridges that happened down from Storrieth just when he most needed them.

‘I’ve a gun there’s no use for,’ Scroope had said, on that far-off afternoon. ‘It would only get rusty up there at the House. Keep it clean, if I need it later on.’

Wee Daunt remembered these matters, as he stood with the gate in his hand, waiting for the rider to pass through.

‘You’re good to me,’ he said, with quick, passionate conviction.

Scroope reached down and touched him on the shoulder. His heart was not empty any longer. It was too full—of haphazard, keen compassion for this dwarf whose soul was meant for happier ventures.

(To be continued.)

MAKIK.

A SOLDIER IN THE DESERT.

BY MAJOR HUBERT YOUNG, C.M.G., D.S.O.

I.

HOWEVER many times a traveller may have been to the East, there is on his way back one experience which is always new. After a day or two in the Red Sea, which he finds unexpectedly wide, he wakes one morning to see a line of rocky hills stretching on either side of him, and to realise that he is now in the Gulf of Suez. As the gulf narrows, he cannot believe that the ship will ever find her way out through that forbidding circle of rock and desert. It is only when she rounds the last headland, and he sees the white houses of Suez floating in the mirage, that he is reassured.

But where would he find himself if the navigator were really to make a mistake, and take the wrong turning in the night? There would be nothing to show him when he came up on deck in the morning that he was now in the sister gulf which lies between the Peninsula of Sinai and the Land of Midian. The same ring of barren hills would shut him in; he would feel the same doubt of ever breaking through them; only this time the doubt would be justified. Instead of the white houses and the bustle of canal and shipyard, he would find at last a land-locked bay from which there was no escape. The line of precipitous hills would close ahead of him, with no magic water-way to lead him to the West. Sloping gently up from a dazzling beach, he would see the sandy incline of the Wady Araba, which runs down from the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and stark against a pitiless sky the rugged and untrodden peaks of the most desolate country in the world. Tucked away in the north-east corner, a ruined fort behind a fringe of palm-trees marks the tumble-down village of Akaba. In ordinary times the only sign of life to be seen from the deck would be a few camels with their uncouth herds, or possibly a small fishing dhow; but if our traveller had arrived at Akaba in the month of March 1918 he would have seen a number of tents pitched on the sand-hills, and over the ruined fort a strange flag flying.

When the Sherif of Mecca raised the standard of revolt against the Turks in 1916 and drove them out of Jeddah and Mecca, they

retired to Medina, the rail-head of the Hejaz railway. Based on successive Red Sea ports, where they were helped with Allied supplies and arms, the Sherif's third son, Feisal, and his brothers worked gradually northwards, isolating an ever-lengthening strip of the line as they went, and by February 1917 the whole coast south of Akaba, with the strip of country lying between the Red Sea and the Hejaz railway, was in the hands of the Arabs. The railway itself was entirely in Turkish hands all the way from Damascus to Medina, but its military importance became progressively less as it went south. The first short section of 100 miles from Damascus to the important junction of Deraa was the trunk artery of all the railway communications in Syria and the Hejaz. From Deraa one limb ran westward through the Yarmuk gorge and supplied the main Turkish army opposed to Allenby west of Jordan. The other ran south for fifty miles to Amman, where were Turkish headquarters east of Jordan, and again 125 miles to Maan, which had a garrison of three or four thousand. North of Maan the Turks were not confined to the railway, and had detachments in the hill-country between the line and the Dead Sea. But all along the 475 miles from Maan to Medina, where Fakhri Pasha was besieged with 17,000 men, they were strung out in tiny garrisons which were pinned to the line by the rebel Arabs. This section stretched like a causeway through a sea of desert, and was vulnerable at every point to Arab attack. Helped by a band of specially chosen British officers, the Sherifian leaders kept the line cut, and harassed the isolated Turkish garrisons to such an extent that Fakhri and his army were unable to rejoin the main Turkish armies in Syria. Apart from the string of garrisons along the Hejaz railway there was practically no Turkish force left between Maan and Medina except the garrison of Akaba, which was itself connected with Maan by two or three smaller posts. In May 1917 one of the British officers with the Arabs, a young archaeologist named Lawrence, determined on his own initiative to try a bold stroke. This was nothing less than to transfer the Arab base at one stride 250 miles to the north, from the open roadstead of Wejh to the deep land-locked harbour of Akaba. The idea was quite mad, as Akaba was impregnable from the sea and could only be taken by a surprise attack in rear. But Lawrence was quite mad too, with the splendid madness which made Farmer George say of Wolfe, 'I wish he would bite some of my other generals!' Taking with him Sherif Nasir and a handful of Bedouin, he swooped down



unexpectedly from an oasis in the desert east of the railway line, which he had reached after almost incredible exertions, and surprised and captured the line of posts which connected Maan and Akaba. The Turkish garrison, finding themselves thus cut off from their base, surrendered, and the way was open for the further development of the plan of campaign which Feisal and Lawrence had worked out.

In February 1918 I was at Karachi with a newly raised battalion which was under orders for Palestine. I had been for two years an Assistant Political Officer in Mesopotamia and was just settling down again to regimental work when I got orders to report at once to the High Commissioner in Cairo. I had a vague idea that Lawrence had sent for me, but it was not until I reported at G.H.Q. at the Savoy Hotel, Cairo, and the door opened to admit the familiar little figure, that I was enlightened. 'They asked me to suggest someone who could take my place in case anything happened to me,' said Lawrence with his mischievous smile, 'and I told them I thought no one could. As they pressed me, I said I could only think of Gertrude Bell and yourself, and they seemed to think you would be better for this particular job than she would. It is quite amusing, and there is plenty of honour and glory to be picked up without any great difficulty.'

All the world now knows how Lawrence picked up his honour and glory. Riding alone through the desert, or with a handful of Arab companions, he made a name for himself such as no other European has made in Arabia or indeed in any other part of the world since the days of the great Elizabethan adventurers. No one will ever know quite how he did it, but we do know that there was never any need or question of his being replaced. Even if a second Lawrence could miraculously have been found, he would not have been needed, for the operations of the Northern Hejaz army under Sherif Feisal had changed their character with the capture of Akaba. Gone were the picturesque days of lone-handed enterprise and dashing raids with troops of Bedouin. The Turkish forces north of Maan were not confined to the railway, nor was it so easy to cut the line here as it had been farther south. Reinforcements and, above all, guns could be moved freely by rail to any threatened garrison, and something more than Bedouin arms, however gallantly led, was now required if permanent results were to be achieved.

Lawrence himself had not yet realised this. He talked to me on that first night of cutting-out expeditions against small posts

upon the line, of desert raids hundreds of miles behind the enemy front in Palestine, of camel charges against wire entanglements, of long lonely rides and sudden breathless thrills, until I did not know whether to be more alarmed or excited at the prospect of what lay before me. I had stayed for a week with Lawrence at the diggings at Carchemish the year before the war, but was not conscious of having impressed him as a potential guerilla leader. On the other hand, he impressed me as a very remarkable archæologist. His revolver shooting at a distant match-box was far better than my own, and he displayed unusually masterful qualities in a scuffle with local dynamiters of fish. My own isolated success was remembering and applying correctly the Greek word *boustrophedon*, and I have an uneasy feeling that it is to this, rather than to any martial or linguistic prowess, that I really owe my summons to Cairo.

The British officers who were helping the Arabs were at first all under political control, but as soon as the Sherifian revolt took definite military shape, a special liaison staff was formed at Allenby's G.H.Q. to deal with what were known as Hejaz operations, and a number of officers were attached to the Arab forces. Dawnay was officially the chief staff officer of 'Hedgehog' at G.H.Q., just as Joyce was officially the senior British officer with Feisal's army. But Lawrence really counted more than either of them with Allenby and Feisal. He used to flit backwards and forwards between G.H.Q. and Feisal's headquarters as the spirit moved him, and I found when I got to Cairo that he was just setting off again. Dawnay and the D.A.Q.M.G., Wordie, were going with him, and I was delighted when he suggested that I should come too. As we steamed slowly down the Gulf of Suez and round the Sinai Peninsula on a small Khedivial steamer bound for Akaba, Lawrence told me what the position was at that time. Feisal's headquarters were at Aba'l Lissan, on the high limestone downs seventy miles inland from Akaba. His advanced troops were twelve miles farther north, at a spring called Waheida, where they faced the Turkish outposts on Semna Hill, which overlooks Maan. His regular army, including camp followers and non-combatants, was not more than three thousand strong. It was armed, clothed, munitioned, and rationed by General Allenby, but it had been for less than six months in being, and could not yet be regarded as a disciplined and up-to-date force. Besides being helped with munitions and rations, Feisal was lent five armoured cars known as the Hejaz

Armoured Car Battery ; a flight of aeroplanes ; two 10-pounder guns mounted on Talbot cars ; a detachment of twenty Indian machine-gunners ; a section of Algerian gunners, armed with four .65 mountain guns ; an Egyptian Army battalion for guard duties at Akaba ; and, later on, a detachment of the Egyptian Camel Corps and a company of the Egyptian Camel Transport Corps to help him with his transport.

These miscellaneous units were all under the command of Joyce, who was not only O.C. Hejaz operations from the point of view of the British units, but had also been Feisal's guide, philosopher, and friend for nearly two years. Next to Lawrence there was no one whom Feisal liked and trusted better than Joyce Bey, and no one who did more to make the Hejaz operations a success. Joyce's staff consisted of a chief staff officer, a base commandant for Akaba, a combined supply and ordnance officer, two medical officers, and a works officer. Others drifted in and out, helping with demolitions, ciphering and deciphering telegrams, landing stores, pegging down wire roads in the sand, and doing a hundred other odd jobs. There was no very elaborate organisation, nor was one needed, at any rate at this stage.

We reached Akaba on the third morning, and I saw for the first time the various camps dotted about on the sand-hills of the Wady Araba, the strings of camels coming down from the Wady Ittm, the planes rising from the aerodrome two miles away, and the squalid little streets of the tumble-down village, full of picturesque tribesmen from all parts of Arabia. Joyce was away, and we only stopped one night at Base Headquarters before going up-country. Leaving Wordie behind to talk ' Q ' to Scott and Goslett, Lawrence, Dawnay, and I packed ourselves next morning into two little Ford tenders, and set out for Aba'l Lissan. Five miles of fair going over the sand and pebbles of the Wady Araba took us to the well at the mouth of the Wady Ittm, which was the last water for thirty miles. After filling up our fantasses and water-bottles we turned into the pass, and ground and rattled our way up the boulder-strewn track. It had been raining the day before, and the wet drew out the many colours of the hills on either hand. Veins of black basalt running across the spurs of grey and rose-pink granite glistened like watered silk in the morning sun. The bottom of the gorge was in some places only a few yards wide. Every now and then we turned a corner where a low-lying spur jutted out across the valley and offered an ideal rearguard position. At one of these places a single company with two or three machine-guns could have stopped an

army corps ; yet it was down this gorge that Lawrence had ridden with Sherif Nasir and his 300 Bedouin nine months before to pounce upon Akaba.

After three hours the pass broadened into the Guwera plain. The granite hills still persisted on the left-hand border of the amphitheatre, but on the right a new formation appeared. Great cliffs of sandstone stood up sheer from the sandy bottom, worn by wind and water into fantastic shapes. Winding in and out among them were stretches of level mud-flat, over which a Rolls-Royce car could run for miles at almost any speed. The road ran straight for six or seven miles across the plain, skirting the left-hand border, to a solitary flat-topped outcrop of sandstone which overhung the Guwera post. Here were the aerodrome and the headquarters of the armoured car battery, and we stopped for an hour to lunch and let the engines cool. We had hardly started again before it began to rain once more. Huddled under the tarpaulin in the back of the car, we bumped along another eighteen miles of heavy sand and then pushed the cars up the Negab, a steep shoulder of the limestone plateau which forms the northern limit of the Guwera plain.

A five-mile run along this plateau brought us to Aba'l Lissan, where a few scattered tents in a fold of the downs marked the headquarters of the Northern Arab Army. It was still pouring with rain, and all three of us were soaked. We huddled into Feisal's bell tent and squatted down dripping—Lawrence on the ground, Dawnay on a camp chair, and myself by Feisal's side on the camp-bed. The middle of the tent floor, round the pole, was uncarpeted and strewn with cigarette butts. The rest of the floor was spread with rugs and matting which our dirty boots soon covered with mud, and to this even Lawrence contributed, as, for once, he was in khaki, of which Feisal did not at all approve. After the usual coffee and greetings Feisal, Lawrence, and Dawnay plunged into a three-sided discussion, while I sat listening and studying the sensitive face of the young prince at my side. He was very simply dressed in a long brown zibun, rather like a cassock, and an embroidered kerchief was loosely knotted round his head, without any head-rope. The whole time he was talking his long, slim fingers were busy with an amber rosary, chasing the beads nervously round the thread. As he leant eagerly forward and waited for Lawrence to translate Dawnay's carefully chosen sentences, he reminded me of some beautiful thoroughbred quivering at the starting-gate.

They discussed the possibility of the Turks attacking Waheida

and Aba'l Lissan. A Sherifian force under Feisal's youngest brother Zeid had advanced to Kerak and Tafilé, near Maan, in January, but the Turks had organised a counter-offensive and were driving them back. The question was whether the Arab force could hold its ground above Maan or whether it would have to fall back on Guwera. Partly to help the Arabs and partly to distract attention from the Palestine coast, where he meant to advance in April, Allenby had decided to make a raid across the Jordan against Amman and to break the railway there. This would be the time for the Arabs to isolate Maan, and he was anxious that they should hold their ground. Feisal was determined to stand fast if he possibly could, and sent for Ja'afar Pasha, the G.O.C. of his Northern Army, who came in and sat down by Lawrence on the floor. He was rather depressed that day and not at all hopeful of the Arabs being able to hold the Aba'l Lissan plateau, but Feisal's confidence was unshaken, and it was decided that they should stick to their positions at all costs.

After the conference Dawnay went back with Wordie to Cairo, and Lawrence disappeared up-country towards Shobek to see what had happened to Zeid. As it turned out, the Turks never took the offensive south of Maan, but merely held the railway and concentrated their efforts on keeping it open as far as Medina. Feisal was thus left undisturbed to organise his army, and to make occasional sallies against a station or post on the line. His regular army was not yet strong enough to spare many detachments for this kind of work, so a good deal of it was done by the attached British officers and units, who acted independently of the official Arab headquarters, but in close touch with Feisal and Ja'afar. Joyce and Maynard, his staff officer, worked out and supervised all these independent affairs, most of which were suggested or inspired in the first place by Lawrence.

When Dawnay went back I was left at Akaba to wait for Joyce, who appeared a few days later. For my first active operation he sent me down the line by Ford van with Wade of the armoured cars towards a station called Dhat al Haj to see whether armoured cars could work there. If they could I was to be given a job lot out of the British units with the Arab army and allowed to use them as I liked. We took with us Matlaq al Juma'an, the sheikh of the Beni Atiya tribe, in whose *dira*, or district, our objective lay. He was such a tiny little man that we made a nest for him in the folds of our bell-tent, which lay on top of one of the loaded vans. Here

he delighted us with his conversation till he was bumped right off at a sudden turn. Thereafter he preferred to ride with his retainers. We got the Fords within eight miles of Dhat al Haj station, and, when they could go no farther, we climbed on our camels to the top of a flat-topped hill about eight miles west of Dhat al Haj, and looked across at the distant line. It was my first sight of the Hejaz railway, and I found it difficult to realise that the little train which puffed slowly out of the station was full of enemies. It rather went to my heart to think of attacking the tiny creatures at all: they looked so forlorn in that desolate place. But we had only to look across from the top of the hill to see that our armoured-car plan was out of the question. All the way from our look-out post to the line were wind-swept billows of bright yellow sand, through which no armoured car could go. There was nothing for it but to go back and report failure.

When we got back to Guwera on April 7 we found that Joyce was ill at Akaba, and Maynard was with Feisal at Aba'l Lissan. Lawrence was on the point of disappearing on one of his mysterious trips up-country, his object this time being, he told me, to blow up the great railway bridge at Tel ash Shahab, ten miles west of Deraa on the Damascus-Haifa Railway, where the line winds down the rocky gorge of the Yarmuk valley. He had only just failed in this some months before, and if he was successful this time, or if he found that he could not manage any of the Yarmuk valley bridges, his idea was to go still farther and have a try for a big bridge between Homs and Hama, more than a hundred miles north of Damascus.

Lawrence had hardly vanished when an Allied maker of cinema films came unexpectedly into the Guwera mess tent. He was bitterly disappointed at missing the uncrowned king of Arabia, whom he had met in Cairo, and who had been prevailed upon to arrange for his flying visit to the Arab theatre of operations. He had perforce to content himself for the present with listening to the stories which were told him by the various British officers in the mess, and in working out a trip to Petra. I never saw him again, and had no hand in the staging of his pictures, which were a triumph of journalistic composition. But they depicted only the earlier Lawrence of the heroic period, and wrongly credited him with doing single-handed the whole of the later work of 'Hedgehog' and of Joyce and his British staff. I came too late, so that I practically never saw the real Elizabethan Lawrence, who characteristically

drew back into his shell during that long period of preparation after the taking of Akaba. Like the Bedouin with whom he rode he held aloof from soldiers and everything they did. At the same time, it is bare justice to give him the chief credit for the whole series of Arab operations which ended in the setting up of Arab rule in Damascus. It may be true that, but for Dawnay and Joyce, only twenty or thirty Arab irregulars would have ridden with Allenby's cavalry into the Syrian capital instead of from six to seven hundred trained and equipped regular soldiers, and what they managed to do on the way might not have been of great military importance. But they would have been there all the same, and it would have been to Lawrence's later inspiration as much as to his earlier achievements that their presence would have been due.

Dawnay was also at Guwera when Wade and I got back. He was on his way to Aba'l Lissan with plans for later co-operation and the news that General Allenby's raid on Amman had been only partly successful, as his cavalry had been unable to hold the town. They had, however, made a good break in the line, under cover of which the Arabs ought to be able to get astride their own section north of Maan. Allenby still proposed to advance along the coast in April, and Dawnay was to do his best to induce Feisal not to attack Maan until then. But when we got to Aba'l Lissan we found Feisal planning a direct attack on the very next day. At Dawnay's earnest request he called a conference of his commanders, and for over two hours a heated discussion raged. Feisal himself quite saw the force of Dawnay's arguments, and so did Ja'afar, who strongly supported the original plan of attacking some point on the railway north of the town; but his chief of staff, Nuri as Said, and the majority of the other regular officers were all eager for a direct attack on Maan. In the end the firebrands were overruled, and the idea of a premature attack on the town was definitely abandoned, though events soon proved too strong for such prudent resolutions of postponement here and co-operation elsewhere. It was decided instead that a strong Arab force should get astride the line to the north, while the mixed British force which was to have attacked Dhat al Haj was now to be diverted to the small station of Tel-ash Shahm, between Maan and Mudawwara.

Greatly to my disappointment I found that I was not to command this force after all. Various reasons were given for this: the Indian machine-gunners had not yet got back from Azraq, so that my Indian Army experience was no longer required; I had

been sent for to do Lawrentian stunts, not to command British units; my knowledge of the language made me more useful with the tribes; and so on. But the fact was that Dawnay was getting tired of only doing staff work at Cairo and wanted a little fun for himself—and who shall blame him? I was to be attached to the force as liaison officer with my old friend Matlaq of the Beni Atiya, who had promised to bring a contingent of his tribe to co-operate. The duties of liaison officer were not very clearly defined, but I gathered that I would ride with the Bedouin and presumably join in the camel charge, or whatever it might be, which would finally annihilate the Turkish garrison. I managed to conceal my alarm at the prospect of being involved in Bedouin operations so soon, and meekly accompanied the reconnoitring party which set out across the mud-flats on April 12 under Dawnay's efficient command. As I looked down from the hill to which Dawnay conducted us, at the little group of buildings with its water-tower, and saw the tiny figures of the twenty Turkish soldiers who formed its garrison moving unsuspectingly about their lawful occasions, I could not help feeling that it was really not quite fair to make such up-to-date and elaborate plans for their destruction. Perhaps I knew in my heart of hearts that I would not have done it nearly so well myself; or perhaps I was only thinking of that camel charge.

But I need not have worried myself about the camel charge. When we got back to Guwera on the 14th we found a message from Matlaq to say that he intended to attack Tebuk, unsupported, with the brave Beni Atiya, and would not therefore be able to co-operate at Tel ash Shahm after all. My last excuse for joining the force was thus removed, and I was left at a loose end. Dawnay could only suggest that I should join Maynard at Aba'l Lissan and wait for another opportunity. As I sat in the mess tent listening to him making his plans, I rather glumly wondered whether I should ever get anything to do at all. It seemed to me that I was falling between two stools, as I was clearly not wanted to understudy Lawrence, and the alternative of commanding a mixed force was also to be taken from me.

Suddenly we heard a tremendous fusillade from the direction of the Arab post at Guwera rock, a mile away. In a very few minutes a breathless Arab rushed into the camp yelling at the top of his voice, 'We have taken Maan! Our Lord Feisal has taken Maan! Praise be to God!' We rushed to the tent-door and hurried over to the rock, which was surrounded by an excited

crowd, dancing and singing, and firing thousands of live rounds into the air. Ducking our way through the rain of joy-bullets, we managed to reach the Arab telephone, and found out after much delay that not Maan, but its outpost Semna, had been taken. Semna was a very strong natural position on a high limestone ridge overlooking the town. It had fallen so easily and at such small cost, that the Arabs underestimated the difficulty of carrying the much stronger defences of Maan itself. The next night Feisal received a petition signed by all his officers in which he was implored to allow the sons of the Arab to hurl themselves against the Turkish trenches. It was clearly useless for him or anyone else to expostulate or to bring forward the old arguments again. Against his better judgment he yielded to their importunity, and on April 16 the town was attacked in force.

I had meanwhile joined Maynard, and found, to my surprise, that Lawrence had come back. We three sat under a bivouac sheet with Feisal nearly all day on the highest point of Ain Waheida, looking across at Semna and the town beyond. Fighting with the utmost gallantry, the little Arab force penetrated right into the station buildings, but a strongly fortified hill overlooking the station defied all their efforts. All night they lay in the positions they had won, and renewed the attack next day. I rode down with Feisal and Zeid to watch the attack from the newly-won heights of Semna, while Lawrence and Maynard went with the two French mountain guns on the right. The Arab army again fought magnificently, but they lost very heavily; gun ammunition ran out; the Bedouin horsemen failed to co-operate; and as evening fell the attack was abandoned. The only ray of light in the gloom was Dawnay's Tel ash Shahm operation. Two stations were taken in fine style and a break made in the line which was never afterwards repaired. It only remained to do the same thing north of Maan for the whole Turkish force on the Hejaz railway to be put permanently out of action.

The north, then, was our next objective, and a concerted move between regulars and Bedouin our unattainable ideal. Lawrence and I talked the position over with Feisal and arranged that a small force should be left at Waheida and Semna to contain Maan, while a strong detachment under Nuri should move north up the line and attack Jurf al Derawish. I was to go with Nuri, and as soon as Jurf had been taken I was to be given two guns to help me to do any damage I could still farther to the south. The local Bedouin

were in this case the Beni Sakhr tribe of Trans-Jordan whose sheikhs were at that time in charge of a Sherifian representative called Marzuq al Takheimi, at a water-hole in the desert some hours north-east of Jurf. My first job was to co-ordinate Marzuq's and Nuri's operations, and to ensure the Bedouin attacking Jurf at the same time as Nuri's detachment. This meant that I must be free to ride from one to the other, and be independent of both for transport and supply. So Lawrence came back with me to Aba'l Lissan and gave me camels and two of his own bodyguard who happened to be with him, the rest being at Musheyish with Marzuq. He suggested that I should take to some form of Arab dress, but I decided not to do this. My beard had by now blossomed out in true Arab style with moon-shaped bald patches on either side of a small imperial, and a ragged fringe round the chin; my face was burnt a rich mahogany, and I looked so much like a rather seedy Bedouin that Arab dress, except of the most gorgeous kind, would have reduced me to a nonentity. Lawrence's own wardrobe was of the most expensive and beautiful kind. His bodyguard of desperadoes ransacked the suqs of Arabia for the most costly products of local workmanship to lay at their small master's feet. Gold was nothing accounted of in the days of Lawrence, and it cannot be denied that the apparently inexhaustible supply of what they called guineas contributed not a little to his influence with the Arabs. But no amount of guineas would have availed him if it had not been for his utter disregard of danger and his readiness to endure not only discomfort but the worst kinds of hardship. I myself had done nothing to justify gorgeousness, even if I had felt inclined for it or Lawrence had encouraged it, and by keeping on my uniform I might escape being shot as a spy if I fell into Turkish hands. So I contented myself with buying an aba to add to the Arab head-dress which all British ranks with the Arab wore, and laying in a few supplies.

The next month was spent in a series of nightmare attempts to get Nuri's detachment started, and to induce Marzuq to bring the Beni Sakhr to join with them in an attack on Jurf. Feisal's army consisted of two distinct forces—the Bedouin irregulars who were nominally controlled by the lesser Sherifs, and the regular army commanded by Ja'afar Pasha and his lieutenant Nuri. If there had been any semblance of organisation or discipline in either of the Arab forces it would perhaps have been possible to get them together in a week or ten days, though I very much doubt it. As

it was, with as many different plans as there were authorities, and an absolute disregard of any known consideration of time or space, the thing was hopeless from the beginning. Seventy miles away, at Musheyish, Marzuq, young and impetuous, sat at his camp-fire with the Beni Sakhr sheikhs—those of them who were prepared to fight the Turks—and wrote direct to Allenby's G.H.Q. promising Arab co-operation if the British crossed the Jordan. On the boulder-strewn downs above Maan, Ja'afar and Nuri worked out schemes for attacking the little station of Abu Jerdun, which was taken by the Arabs and reoccupied by the Turks no less than three times. Neither Marzuq nor Ja'afar was the least anxious to attack Jurf. I rode backwards and forwards between the two, escorted by one or two of Lawrence's bodyguard, and looked on by both parties as a well-meaning fellow enough, but unquestionably a nuisance. I could have had no better training for what was to come later than this month of camel-riding, in the course of which three general rules of conduct were impressed upon me. The first was never to believe that a detachment of Sherifian regulars would start on the appointed day; the second, never to believe that they had started on any day at all unless I had actually seen them on the move; and the third, to place no reliance whatever upon the Bedouin.

My wanderings earned for me the nickname of 'Makik,' or Shuttle. This was first used in friendly derision by one of the Arab officers, but the laugh was turned against him by my accepting the title gladly, and expressing the pious hope that I should succeed in weaving such a robe of honour for our noble Lord Feisal as would make him renowned amongst the princes of the world.

When at last I did get the detachment off, I was not able to go with them. Inexpert bumping on a hard saddle had resulted in internal damage which put camel-riding out of the question for some time, and I could only sit with Feisal's brother Zeid and watch a final attack on Abu Jerdun, for which my precious guns had been commandeered at the last moment. Zeid was very sympathetic when I poured out my woes to him, but I have no doubt that he wondered inwardly what all the fuss was about. No Arab has any idea of the value of time, and to ride 500 miles on a camel, as I had done, crossing the line four times, and spending 100 hours in the saddle, must have seemed an amazingly silly performance. What on earth did it matter whether the detachment started this month or next? It was really incomprehensible why this flushed and

ridiculous person in his dirty uniform, ragged beard, and dusty aba and head-dress should take things so much to heart. All that had to be done was to keep the line cut north of Maan, and this could be done just as well by sitting comfortably at Fagieh, and attacking Abu Jerdun each time the Turks reoccupied it, as by sending a detachment miles away up the line.

He settled himself down with his captured Goertz glasses to watch the show. We had a clear view of the line from Aneiza hill almost to Maan itself. Immediately below us, about two miles off, were the white buildings which marked Abu Jerdun station. Six guns were to cover the attack from the west, and away on the other side of the line were two more—my two—which had been sent across in the night. The Turks had from two to three hundred men in the station, with only one gun, but they had dug deep trenches and would take some driving out.

The attack opened with an aeroplane bombardment of the station. At the same time the eight guns opened fire, and for half an hour the buildings were completely hidden behind a screen of dust and smoke. Unfortunately, the Turks were not in the station at all, but lying low in their trenches, and very little damage was done. The Arab infantry advanced bravely across the open to the attack, but were held up at about six hundred yards. They were only about three hundred all told, and the Turkish fire was very accurate and deadly. Our two armoured cars were right up in the firing line, where every tyre was shot away, but, though they drew a great deal of Turkish fire, it was not enough. One dashing cavalry charge by the Bedouin would probably have turned the scale, but they only clustered in a hollow, well under cover, and did nothing.

Looking away towards Aneiza I suddenly saw a train like a little black caterpillar crawling along the line. I pointed it out to Zeid, and we watched it for some time.

'It cannot do any harm,' he said. 'Nuri ordered the detachment which crossed the line last night to send out a demolition party to blow up a few rails three miles away.'

For more than two hours the attack went on. The train seemed to be getting alarmingly close. It struck me that perhaps Nuri could not see it, so we sent a horseman off to tell him that it was coming, and a little later we saw the armoured cars dash off to meet it. I thought rather bitterly of what I had meant my guns to do north of Aneiza, which would probably have delayed, if it had not

altogether stopped the Turks from trying to reinforce. It turned out afterwards that by some mistake no rails had been blown up at all, and the train came steadily on to within half a mile of the station. The engine was in rear of the trucks, and when the armoured cars dashed out it uncoupled itself and backed away again towards Aneiza. Some of our guns shelled the trucks which were left stranded on the line, but did not seem to hit them. The armoured cars took their place in the firing line again, thinking that they had scared away the engine for good. But the driver was a stout fellow. Choosing a time when the cars were too busy to attend to him, he coolly drove back and shoved the trucks right into the station. This ended the battle. The Arabs were tired out by this time, and had lost rather heavily; the moral effect of this reinforcement was too much for them, and they abandoned the attack.

'I fear we shall not take Abu Jerdun to-day,' said Zeid. 'I am sorry.'

'Yes, indeed,' said I, 'it is a great pity.'

'Do you know why I am sorry?' he went on. 'I should like to have taken that engine-driver and given him a medal!'

After the fight was over I rode back by car to Aba'l Lissan. I went to see Feisal, told him the result of the battle, and said good-bye. I regretted very much that the state of my health would not permit of any more camel-riding, but I hoped that the detachment would eventually start and be a great success. I may add that the guns did actually start, either the next day or the day after, and that Sherif Nasir, with the help of Peake and Hornby, successfully captured two stations north of Jurf, where he maintained himself for some time, and did a great deal of damage to the line. It was disappointing not to be with them, but when the news of their success reached me in the Akaba hospital I was delighted to think that I had had some hand in getting them started.

While I lay in the hospital tent at Akaba I pondered over my adventures with the Beni Sakhr. Everything I had seen and heard confirmed my opinion of the Bedouin, and I was not at all keen to go on working with them. They were useless against the railway without artillery support, and could not be depended upon to co-operate in any attack on a fortified position. Politically, of course, Feisal would be helpless without them, but I doubted whether even Lawrence could get unsupported Bedouin to do any good on this northern section of the line, where the enemy was so much stronger; and, even if he could, they would never work to pro-

gramme. More and more clearly did I see that Arab co-operation with Allenby could only be secured through the regular army. That they could and would fight to the death had been proved at Maan and Abu Jerdun. If they could only be made mobile, and organised to send out and maintain small detachments, in any direction, with two or even one of the indispensable guns, Feisal would have an instrument to his hand with which he could do whatever Allenby wanted. The trouble was that they were both too regular and not regular enough. The officers quoted the textbook quite correctly against you when you asked them to take a risk, but failed to realise that the risk was due in the first place to their own faulty administration. We must help them to improve this, so that if Allenby wanted a diversion made at a given spot and on a given date a detachment would be there punctually for the Bedouin to rally round. Lawrence was enough and more than enough to help Feisal with the Bedouin; the place for me was with Joyce and the regular army. Having to go to Cairo to see a doctor, I took the opportunity of suggesting this to Dawnay, who quite agreed when he heard the inside history of the Beni Sakhr fiasco; so when I was fit again I came back to Akaba as Joyce's 'Q.' Maynard was at the same time relieved by Stirling, who became 'G.', and we three set to work to do what we could to make the regular army mobile.

It will be remembered that Feisal had been lent a company of the Egyptian Camel Transport Corps to help him in getting up his supplies and ammunition from Akaba to Waheida. The time had come when Hinde, who commanded this company, and all his British and Egyptian non-commissioned officers and men could, for some reason, no longer be spared. Allenby only agreed to leave the 700 camels with Feisal on condition that he ran them with Arabs, and one of my first jobs was to organise the brutes into what was called the Hejaz Transport Corps. This gave me a good deal of trouble. Feisal had no transport personnel, and was forced to send urgently for wild camel-men from Mecca to replace the Egyptians, whose organisation allowed one man for every two camels. Officers and N.C.O.'s had to come from the Arab Regular Army, though I had insisted on keeping Hinde's two lieutenants, Spence and Grey, for the first month at any rate. My only hope of keeping the company in being and the camels fit was to insist on the Arabs following the system worked out by Hinde for the Egyptians, and for this I must have British officers to help me. Under Hinde's

system Waheida was getting 180,000 lbs., or eighty tons, every ten days. Eight tons a day is not much for a force of from three to four thousand men with a dozen guns, but Feisal could usually manage to hire Bedouin caravans at an exorbitant rate to help him out. The fear was that under Arab control the company would be split up into little pieces, and sent up and down at the caprice of anyone who had a wire to pull. The consequence would be that less and less attention would be paid to the care of the animals, and in a short time they would all be out of action. Only those who have seen a corps of 700 camels will be able to realise what a task this reorganisation alone involved. It would be tiresome to describe the means by which it was done. The Arab officers of the new Hejaz Transport Corps were intensely anxious to preserve their independence, or *Istiqlal*, and so were the camels. This abstraction caused more difficulty than any material obstacle. The following dialogue between myself and the Arab Commandant may be taken as typical :

MYSELF. Good morning, Ali Bey. Are the camels ready to go up to Aba'l Lissan ?

ALI BEY. Good morning, my brother. I fear not.

MYSELF. How is that, my friend ? They were to be ready at nine o'clock, and it is now eleven.

ALI BEY. I have employed them in carrying some supplies which were required by Sheikh So-and-so.

MYSELF. But that is not what they are for, my brother. His Highness Sherif Feisal is anxiously awaiting them at Aba'l Lissan.

ALI BEY. I am the commander of the Transport Corps. I shall employ it at my discretion.

MYSELF (*rather shortly*). Of course, I know that you are the commander. But this particular convoy has to go to Aba'l Lissan to-day.

ALI BEY (*snorting*). I am an Arab. I am working for Arab *Istiqlal*. I take orders from no one.

MYSELF. I am not attempting to give you orders, my friend. I am only saying that the camels must go to Aba'l Lissan to-day, or the troops there will be without supplies. This is understood.

ALI BEY (*wildly*). I take no orders from you. I am *mustaqqil* (independent).

MYSELF. Yes, yes. I know. You are *mustaqqil*. I am *mustaqqil*. Sidi Feisal is *mustaqqil*. The camels are *mustaqqil*. But *mustaqqil* or no *mustaqqil*, they will jolly well start in one hour from now for Aba'l Lissan !

I am afraid that my eagerness to get things done occasionally offended some of the more sensitive Arab officers. Three of them once protested to Nuri that they were not being treated with the respect due to independent Allies. But Nuri's tact was equal to the occasion. 'Why worry, my dears?' said he. 'He talks to them just as he does to us!' By 'them' he meant Joyce and the other British officers, whose thankless and little recognised labours were so largely responsible for the success of Feisal's great raid, and with whom I was always on the best of terms.

Not long after I got back to Akaba we heard that Lawrence had prevailed on Allenby to spare no less than another two thousand camels to help Feisal. He had always had in mind that some time in the autumn an Arab force should set out from Waheida and ride across the desert on the east of the line right up to Deraa, where they would attack the Turkish communications simultaneously with Allenby's main attack on the other side of the Jordan. His first idea was that he would mount 1000 Arab regulars on 500 camels, two men riding on each animal, and send them swooping across the 300 miles which separate Aba'l Lissan from Deraa with their supplies and ammunition tied on with bits of string, and a roll of apricot paste, or *Qamr-ud-din*, as the Turks call their staple ration, snugly stowed in each of the thousand haversacks. How long he thought the ride would take was never quite clear. He probably calculated on about eighty miles a day, a distance which his Bedouin irregulars could easily manage. Say four days for the trip to Deraa, one day for demolitions, and three days to race back in if Allenby's big push was unsuccessful.

Lawrence's main conception was perfectly sound, but he was a bit out in his details. He never knew very much about the regular army, and did not in the least understand how different it was from his own Bedouin. He had no sympathy with our transport problems, for he held all military organisations in profound contempt, and the letter 'Q,' so justly and deeply revered by every regular, had no place in the Lawrentian alphabet. We, on the other hand, knew only too well that the problem of moving an Arab regular force strong enough to do really useful work was not less, but a hundred times more difficult than that of moving an equal number of other regular troops. To start with, the British officers were not in executive command, and could give no direct orders, even to a camel-herd. Everything had to be done either in the form of a request to the higher Arab authorities, or, more often, in the form of an intimation to subordinates that the higher

authorities wished something done which, in the majority of cases, those authorities knew nothing whatever about. There was a continual risk of serious friction in a system of this kind ; but what else could be done ? The subordinate officers were in many cases incompetent and in all cases unaware of it, and if they were left to run their own show nothing whatever would be done.

It will be seen that the problem of forming a caravan of some two thousand camels in charge of Arab camel-men, with the object of enabling an detachment of Arab regulars to march 300 miles and strike a blow on a given day at a given point on the enemy line of communications, was in itself no easy one. But this was not all. The force would be useless without guns, and with the exception of the Talbot 10-pounders all the guns in the Arab army were carried on mules. The proposed route led through only three oases—Jafar, Bair, and Azraq. Jafar was roughly sixty marching miles from Aba'l Lissan ; Bair was sixty miles from Jafar ; Azraq was 120 miles from Bair, and sixty from Deraa, where we were to strike. Loaded camels and loaded mules could not be asked to go more than thirty miles in a day. The caravan must therefore be prepared for two successive stages of two days' march each, followed by a stage of four days' march and a final stage of two days, each stage being without a drop of water. The camel is fortunately enabled by nature to do a march of this kind, though he does not like it, but water for men and mules would have to be carried on the camels' backs. And it was not enough to carry two days' water, though this would be enough for three out of the four stages. The third stage needed four days' water, so that an extra supply of empty water tins had to be filled at the end of the second stage and loaded on to such of the food camels as had by that time become light. Then there was the problem of food for the men and forage for the animals. The so-called oases of Jafar, Bair, and Azraq are merely water-holes in the arid expanse of desert. They are uninhabited, and produce food for neither man nor beast. Every morsel of food and forage for the ten days' march to Deraa would either have to be carried with the force or dumped in advance at the three oases. Dumping forage by camel at a spot eight marches away is not so easy. The idea that a camel can go for indefinite periods without either food or water, supporting himself by a process known as living on his hump, is false, and he must eat, even when he is only providing himself with food for a future journey.

(To be continued.)

A YACHT AND A HANDKERCHIEF.

It was one of those dancing afternoons when Netta Coventry dropped her handkerchief into the green water of the little harbour. The sunlight danced on the old wooden piles, tripping with dainty feet over the green seaweed and between the clustered shells: it tripped over the green water and on the little boats that rocked lazily on the curtseying waves. There came round the end of the jetty a small white dinghy with the water dripping from the glistening blades of the oars like diamonds. It bumped against the slippery steps, bobbing about like a moving target in a rifle range, while the lapping water gurgled beneath its bows. But Netta was not interested in the water; her interest was centred in the two young men in the dinghy. They were tall dark young men, with brown thin faces, and lazy blue eyes and lazy pleasant voices. So Netta hesitated a moment, her head sideways like a bird's, while she listened to the chug-chug of the little ferry that fussed up on the other side of the jetty, and which she had intended should convey her across the river to a tennis party, and then she dismissed the idea of the tennis party from her mind and dropped her handkerchief into the harbour, so that it fluttered past the dinghy and became a small, white, soaked square floating forlornly away. Then she gave a quick alarmed cry, and while one young man made a grab at it, the other looked up and saw a slim, bare-armed girl, with a brown pointed face and very white teeth, staring in humorous woe at the sodden cambric.

So that was that. The ferry chugged away and Netta lamented the fact in agitated accents, and the owners of the dinghy offered to sail her across in their yacht. Netta smiled again, descended into the dinghy, and was borne away over the dancing water to where a white yacht dipped and swayed in the wash of the unromantic ferry.

And that would have been quite all right, and it might have ended there, with one laughing afternoon on the sun-kissed sea (since Netta's tennis party was conveniently forgotten), but that, later, Netta suddenly remembered what a very small place that seaport was, and that though she was inclined to regard herself as one to whom adventures were the spice of life, and who was superior to the conventions which limit the amusement of most people, she

began to consider the fact that she intended sooner or later to marry someone who was well off and otherwise desirable, and that lack of conventions was detrimental to such an ambition. And that, after all, though a yacht was a very nice thing to have, this one was not a very expensive-looking sort of thing, and its owners seemed to be entirely devoid of money and extremely happy-go-lucky. They were twins and answered to the names of Timothy and Christopher Marsden, and they were very nice ; but still, they were birds of passage, and Netta did not feel inclined to waste a great deal of time on birds of passage, and so, when they asked her her name, and suggested that they should come and call upon her people, she thought for a moment and the spirit of mischief entered into her. She said that she was Felicity-Ann Draycott, and gave the address of the small cottage where Felicity-Ann lived.

As she went home, thinking out excuses for her missed tennis party, she thought of Felicity-Ann, and a faint gleam of malice came into her eyes. It would probably cause Felicity-Ann quite a peck of trouble if those two turned up to call on her. There was something irritating about Felicity-Ann. Not that she interfered in any way with Netta's amusement or social successes. It was just that something about Felicity-Ann, for all the fact that her clothes were absurd, and the way she did her hair so old-fashioned, that she was dull to talk to, and not a great success at the dances ; she seemed to have some hidden serenity that made her perversely blind to the fact that Netta was so much more successful and attractive ; in fact she appeared quite unconscious of it, and that, for some reason, irked Netta. If Felicity-Ann had only seemed to realise what she missed by not being like Netta, had only seemed to be jealous, and had made some effort to compete with Netta (albeit unsuccessfully), Netta could have felt much more kindly towards her. Moreover, Felicity-Ann was engaged to Thornley Beard, who was pompous, dull, and narrow-minded, but also enormously rich. And though Netta was loud in her comments on the horror of being engaged to Thornley Beard, she was really horribly annoyed that Felicity-Ann had got him.

And therefore, thought Netta—and the little gleam became more pronounced—it might be more than a little embarrassing for Felicity-Ann while Thornley was there.

She reached the gate of one of the dignified houses that lay along the water front, and looked out to where a yacht with grape-coloured shadows on the white hull lay on the calm water, and a smile curled her lips.

Felicity-Ann sat at breakfast and gazed at a quite incomprehensible letter that made her inclined to blush whenever her mother looked at her. Felicity-Ann's mother was a lady of irreproachable family, and she never forgot it and never allowed Felicity-Ann to forget it. And Felicity-Ann's letter, alluding as it did to yachts and clandestine meetings, was certainly not the sort of letter that ladies of irreproachable family and behaviour were in the habit of receiving. A faint flush stole into Felicity-Ann's cheeks and she put the letter hastily away beneath the napkin on her knee, and began to eat haddock. Her mother looked up from the perusal of a long letter of her own. 'Who is your letter from, my dear?' she asked.

Felicity-Ann gulped down some coffee.

'It's from Thornley,' she said hastily. And then wondered anxiously whether her mother had seen the envelope, because Mrs. Draycott had an innocent habit of inspecting all the letters before Felicity-Ann got them. But on this occasion she had been late for breakfast and had omitted that little ceremony.

But Felicity-Ann was consumed with horror at herself. What evil spirit had incited her to a lie that was so easily found out, and that would undoubtedly recoil upon her during the day? She became bright crimson. Mrs. Draycott, however, had returned to her own letter, and Felicity-Ann's blush slowly subsided, leaving her bright-eyed, slightly frightened, and thinking furiously.

By and by Mrs. Draycott rose from the table. Felicity-Ann seized another piece of toast and began to butter it. She felt that she simply could not plunge into the question of meals with the cook until she had seriously considered her action in regard to the letter. That piece of toast was her only excuse for staying on in the sunny morning-room and rereading that astonishing epistle. Mrs. Draycott affectionately pulled her hair farther over her ears and departed, while Felicity-Ann shook herself like an indignant terrier. If there was one thing she disliked more than another, it was her mother's habit of treating her head as if it were a kind of dummy on which to practise hairdressing. She settled her chin firmly between her hands and stared out into the warm summer morning.

She was dressed in blue, the blue of lupins nodding beneath a golden sun, and her dress was long-waisted and billowed out into a full, quaint skirt. It had a ruffley organdie collar tied with blue moiré ribbon. Mrs. Draycott insisted on Felicity-Ann wearing 'quaint' frocks, believing that they showed character and were original,

and unlike those dreadful, short-skirted styles that made all girls look alike. And Felicity-Ann wore her burnished brown hair parted at the side and dressed closely round her small, solemn face. It was innocent of any sort of a wave, and had to be content to look soft and cloudy and demure; but Felicity-Ann hated it, and longed to have it shingled and be allowed to wear short frocks, and be anything but demure and quiet and charming. Her blue eyes shone mutinously beneath thick lashes when she remembered how her mother had pushed her Thornley-wards, pointing out that he would never look at any of these shingled chits, like Netta Coventry for instance.

That morning she was not so conscious of her good fortune in being engaged to Thornley as she might have been. She was absorbed in that letter. It started without a proper beginning, no 'Dear Miss So-and-so' or 'Dear Felicity-Ann.' It just started 'We are coming to pay our call this afternoon,' and went on in a kind of haphazard way alluding to a yacht called the *Lapwing*, and handkerchiefs and dancing waves, and was signed Timothy Marsden. She knew quite well that she ought to show her mother the letter, and let her deal with these mad people who were coming to pay a call, but somehow Felicity-Ann felt rebellious. She liked the name Timothy Marsden; it sounded somehow romantic. She tried to believe that he must be someone she had met at a dance, someone whose name she had not caught. But she was unhappily aware of the fact that, at all the dances she had been to, she had been very much advertised as Thornley's bride-elect, and whatever young men had been introduced to her had asked for the correct duty dance, and had noticed her no more. And then a small smile curved Felicity-Ann's lips, a reckless little smile. It consigned Thornley Beard and his money to . . . well, at any rate it made it quite plain that for the moment Felicity-Ann did not care a cuss for his probable disapproval. She stuffed the letter down the front of her blue frock and went out to interview the cook.

Fate and all the little laughing gods conspired to help Felicity-Ann. To begin with, Mrs. Draycott went out at four o'clock to call on Mrs. Coventry, and Felicity-Ann was left to sit in the drawing-room with a large photograph of Thornley smiling rather foolishly down from the mantelpiece, to watch the butterflies flutter round the rose trees and across the patch of velvet lawn under the shadow of a mulberry tree, while her heart thumped as she listened for the sound of the door-bell. And when the bell eventually tinkled through the quiet house, she was seized with panic and stood up,

but when the door opened and the parlourmaid ushered somebody in, it was not anybody strange at all, but merely Thornley.

Felicity-Ann promptly forgot how panic-stricken she had been, and was filled with a burning disappointment. Thornley kissed her, presented her with a box of chocolates, and sat down in the most comfortable chair. Large, blond, and quite good-looking was Thornley, but proprietorial, and somewhat complacent.

He was in a mildly melancholy mood. Serious business called him from home. He would probably be away for three weeks. Felicity-Ann was shockingly aware of soaring spirits. She did her best to suppress it, but far from feeling suitably regretful, she felt like singing. But she gave Thornley tea, pouring it out ceremoniously from the fat silver teapot into the fragile china that was the apple of Mrs. Draycott's eye; and she looked extremely small and solemn, and the brightness of her eyes was shaded by her long lashes.

The Draycotts' house did not face the water front, and so Felicity-Ann was unaware of a white yacht shimmering in green water, or a small dinghy that bobbed towards the jetty. She sat with a feeling of severe disappointment and administered to Thornley's material needs in the way of cake and scones, and was quite unprepared for the second ring of the bell. In fact she did not hear it, and her first realisation came when two astonishing and absurdly alike young men stood in the doorway and gazed at her as if they were seeing visions.

Felicity-Ann's heart gave a sudden jump, and then she became reckless again. She smiled at Timothy and held out her hand, and looked over her shoulder at Thornley, 'I don't think you know Mr. Marsden?' Thornley shook his head and acknowledged the introduction with some misgiving. His train was due to leave in half an hour, and he did not feel pleased at the idea of leaving Felicity-Ann talking to these dark and irresponsible young men. He wished that Mrs. Draycott had been there, and though he could not say why, he felt uneasily that there was something 'up.'

Timothy led the way into the room as he had always led the way, even into the world. He had been born about a quarter of an hour ahead of Christopher and had always kept the lead. Christopher was quite content about it, and didn't particularly want to lead anything, liking a peaceful and unworried existence. It was Timothy who liked adventures; it was Timothy who had fished out Netta Coventry's handkerchief, and it was Timothy who had insisted on following it up by calling. However, Christopher

was not easily upset, and if Timothy was full of ingenuity, Christopher never showed the slightest signs of surprise whatever happened. So now he followed Timothy, and smiled gravely at Felicity-Ann and left Timothy to talk.

Felicity-Ann, inwardly full of tumultuous and distracted feelings, became immersed in pouring out more tea. Thornley gazed suspiciously at Timothy and Christopher and cleared his throat several times. Felicity-Ann handed Timothy his tea with a hand that shook slightly. And Timothy noticed the shakiness and prepared to deal with Thornley.

'Nice little harbour here,' said Timothy casually, addressing himself to Thornley.

'Er . . . yes,' said Thornley, 'very picturesque.'

'Good anchorage,' said Timothy.

Felicity-Ann looked up.

'How's the *Lapwing*?' she asked, and her eyes were very bright. A twinkle lurked in Timothy's.

'She's splendid,' he said; 'and how's the handkerchief?'

Felicity-Ann's eyes dropped.

Thornley stood up reluctantly. 'My train is about due—I'm afraid I must go,' he said.

'Oh, *must* you?' said Felicity-Ann, and he saw to his amazement that she was quite scarlet.

It made him feel most uneasy. All the way to London he thought of Felicity-Ann's scarlet cheeks, and in spite of himself, uncomfortable suspicions attacked him. It was incredible that Felicity-Ann had been flirting. She had never been known to flirt; but still those pricking, uncomfortable suspicions stuck to him like burrs.

Felicity-Ann remained to face the lazy smile of Christopher and the cheerful and quizzical twinkle in Timothy's eyes.

'Who is he?' said Timothy, and smiled. 'An uncle?'

Felicity-Ann plunged deeper into the mire.

'No,' she said; 'he's an old friend of ours.'

'And very worthy and estimable he must be,' said Timothy, 'though possibly a trifle heavy.'

And Felicity-Ann laughed.

'And now, tell me,' continued Timothy, 'where did we meet, and how? Because I'm quite sure that other estimable and worthy friends may descend upon you at any minute, not to speak of stern parents; and in these little matters it's always as well to tell the same story!'

But at that all Felicity-Ann's fine recklessness deserted her and she became horribly shy and ashamed.

'I suggest,' said Christopher suddenly, and something pleasant and understanding in his voice made her feel better, 'that we met at a dance; and, as would certainly have happened, we asked if we might come and call; and that you forgot all about us, as you probably would—because now that we *have* met you, it would be a most unfortunate thing if we couldn't see you any more.'

Felicity-Ann pulled herself together.

'I've been behaving disgracefully,' she said, 'but—but your letter was so astonishing, and . . . tell me, why did you write to me?'

Timothy shook his head.

'That's a story that involves someone else,' he said.

Felicity-Ann sought in vain for words. She only succeeded in looking very pretty, very solemn, and very young; and while she was making a valiant struggle to do what she knew was right, and banish these attractive young men forever, Mrs. Draycott came in, and she found herself again introducing Timothy in a kind of dream.

Mrs. Draycott was not of a suspicious nature. For that matter Felicity-Ann had never given her cause to be suspicious. She was tall and grey-haired and very dignified, and although she had an excessively charming manner, Felicity-Ann was always rather afraid of her. Whenever Felicity-Ann tried to do anything that she did not approve of, Mrs. Draycott was more grieved than angry: hurt and upset that her little girl, who was all she had left in the world, should contemplate for one moment such a course of action; and then Felicity-Ann subsided. But she was not suspicious. After all, what was more natural than that two young men should wish to call on Felicity-Ann? Just so long as Felicity-Ann was safely engaged to Thornley, other manifestations of her attractiveness were quite welcome.

'Really,' she said interestedly, 'and you are yachting?'

Felicity-Ann was very silent, but then she always had been very silent. Mrs. Draycott noticed nothing. But Felicity-Ann was miserably conscious that now she could never go back on it, she could never confess the true story now.

'Let me see,' continued Mrs. Draycott amiably, 'Marsden . . . are you any relation of the Tremlet Marsdens?'

Timothy hesitated—Felicity-Ann saw him hesitate—and glance towards Christopher with a smile at the corner of his mouth. 'As a matter of fact, yes,' he said after a moment.

Mrs. Draycott became more amiable. She invited them to dine the following Saturday, and to make a party for the Club Dance. Felicity-Ann's heart gave a small thud. And when they had gone, in spite of her sense of deep guilt, life seemed infinitely more exciting than it had ever been before.

Felicity-Ann became acquainted with the *Lapwing*. She spent one glorious afternoon sailing across a blue sea under a sky that was full of proud ships sailing to distant ports, ships that were made of cloud, while Timothy lounged by the tiller and talked lazily and foolishly, and Christopher lay in the bows and strummed a ukelele. Mrs. Draycott was unaware of it all. Felicity-Ann had gone out that afternoon saying that she was going for a walk, and somehow or other she found herself by the harbour. She stayed to watch the ferry chug in, and as she stood by one of the old weather-worn posts, Netta passed and looked at her suspiciously. Something about Felicity-Ann's starry eyes and smiling lips annoyed Netta unaccountably. Felicity-Ann seemed wrapped in a dream. Netta was in a fearful hurry or she would have stayed and talked to her, since she very much wanted to know whether Felicity-Ann was waiting for anything . . . a white dinghy, for instance. But she had to go, and soon after she went a white dinghy pulled into the steps and Timothy hailed Felicity-Ann out of her day-dream.

But later, when the little light in the cabin threw an amber beam on to the sable sail which looked like the wing of the angel of death, the yacht glided into the little harbour, sliding silently past the old posts that threw shadows across the worn boards of the jetty. And Netta, looking out of her window, heard the thrum of a ukelele, and presently in the dusk made out the figures of Felicity-Ann and the two brothers on the quay. She watched them all walk slowly home through the warm dusk, and quite suddenly remembered Thornley Beard; and remembered, too, that Felicity-Ann had been perpetually held up as an example to her, and realised that she loathed her.

Mrs. Draycott's dinner party was a great success. She asked Moira Stenning to make a fourth, and she sat at the head of the table and reflected that Felicity-Ann looked prettier than ever before, and that the twin Marsdens were very nice looking, and above all were connected with the Tremlet Marsdens. Felicity-Ann thought of nothing except the fact that she was going with Timothy and Christopher, and that it was quite a different feeling from going to a dance with Thornley. Of course it had been very nice when she had become engaged to Thornley, and everybody had

said how nice he was and what a good match, and she had felt important and had quite liked Thornley, but, looking back, she felt that it had never been exciting, it had never made her feel warm and thrilled, it had never made her feel really alive. When they got to the dance everything was quite different. People looked interested, and the other girls slightly envious. Moira was frankly intrigued. 'Where did you meet them,' she asked Felicity-Ann as they shed their wraps in a small cloakroom, 'and why haven't I seen them before?'

Felicity-Ann stumbled a little in her answer. Mrs. Draycott never noticed people at the dances; she played bridge with the other mothers, but Moira would know quite well that they had never appeared at any of the dances before. She plunged a piece of cotton-wool into the powder-box before replying.

'I was at school with their sister,' she said at last, 'and when they arrived in their yacht they came and called.'

She began to feel quite alarmed at her own depravity and the appalling ease with which she concocted these stories. She felt quite relieved when Netta Coventry came into the room and stopped Moira asking questions. Netta was looking very pretty, and was cultivating an enigmatic smile which became more pronounced when she saw Felicity-Ann powdering her nose.

Then the band started and Felicity-Ann began to dance with Christopher. She noticed suddenly, and with a small stab of uneasiness, that Christopher was smiling rather in the manner of Netta Coventry, and that he was looking at Netta as he danced. A flame of jealousy shot through her, and for the rest of the evening she was conscious that both Christopher and Timothy looked at Netta a good deal, and that there was an odd smile in their eyes when they looked. After supper she forgot it. She was dancing with Timothy and they went to sit out on the lawn that ran down to the sea wall. The sea murmured lazily, and the wind had a salt tang in it as they sat there on the clipped grass near a clump of elm trees that cast mysterious shadows. While Timothy talked she forgot everything except the witchery of the night. Once she felt an impulse to explain everything to him, to tell him about Thornley and how reckless she had felt, but the moment passed, and, anyway, she wasn't certain that Christopher was not the more understanding of the two. The thin wail of a violin sobbed through the night, and they stood up and sauntered towards the club house. Then, as they passed the dark clump of elms, they heard Netta Coventry's laugh—a hard, common, spiteful little laugh. 'At any

rate,' said Netta clearly, 'she's engaged to Thornley Beard, and she'll have to explain to him.'

And then Christopher's lazy voice, 'Do you think it was quite playing the game to tell him?'

Felicity-Ann hurried on. She felt that Timothy must see her blush even though it was dark.

'Don't get the wind up,' he said amiably; 'there's nothing to get rattled about.'

Felicity-Ann stopped short and faced him.

'It's true,' she muttered.

'Well, now tell me all about it,' he said; 'open confession is good for the soul.'

Felicity-Ann told him in a very small, stifled voice. And then, 'I suppose Netta has told Thornley,' she said. 'I don't really mind about Thornley, because in any case I don't think I could marry him now. But Thornley will tell mother, and she will consider it's an awful disgrace.'

'I don't quite see how Netta can tell him without giving herself away,' said Timothy reflectively, after he had told the story of the handkerchief in full.

'I expect she said she snubbed you,' said Felicity-Ann fiercely. 'Netta would say anything.'

Timothy laughed.

'But anyway, Felicity-Ann,' he said, 'you haven't done anything so very terrible—nothing to justify Thornley breaking the engagement.'

'Thornley,' said Felicity-Ann solemnly, 'is very conventional.'

Netta and Christopher strolled out of the clump of elms and went towards the ball-room. They were still deep in conversation, and Felicity-Ann saw them go with a hot ache in her heart.

'Anyway,' she said wearily to Timothy, 'it doesn't matter; let's go back.'

Timothy looked after Netta and Christopher, and raised his eyebrows.

'Come on, Felicity-Ann,' he said; 'we'll fix Thornley—we'll explain to him.'

'I—I don't want him explained to,' said Felicity-Ann in a choking voice, 'I don't care about him!' and she fled towards the club house.

Timothy strolled after her. 'Little cat!' he murmured to the summer night. And 'Little cat,' he said again when he saw Netta standing by Thornley, gazing at him with just the right amount of

sympathy in her eyes. Moira waved to him as she danced by with Christopher. Christopher, thought Timothy, was dancing in a very peculiar way. He kept circling round and round, never getting far from Thornley and Netta. Thornley, apparently, did not see either Timothy or Christopher. He wore a look of patient and hurt resignation.

'He makes me want to make faces at him,' thought Timothy.

But then Felicity-Ann appeared from the direction of the cloak-room. She looked very pale and walked quickly through the ball-room, past Thornley and Netta and towards the door. As she passed Thornley bowed in a distant and reproving manner.

'And now I should like to hit him,' thought Timothy, and took a contemplative step forward.

And while he was still contemplating, Moira was more or less spun into his arms, and Christopher was standing in front of Thornley and Netta.

'Christopher is quite exceptionally annoyed,' said Timothy to the amazed Moira. 'Look at him!'

Moira looked.

Christopher's mouth was tight shut, his eyes unpleasantly cold, and he was rather white about the nostrils. Thornley was very red. He blew out his cheeks and tried to ignore Christopher and walk away with Netta. It was, however, difficult to retire with dignity when a tall thin young man stood directly in his path and showed no intention of moving, and was also obviously without any regard for the niceties of life, and the requirements of polite society. Thornley stopped and frowned portentously.

'May I ask,' said Christopher, 'if you consider that my brother and myself are improper people for your fiancée to know?'

'That is a matter I shall discuss with Miss Draycott,' said Thornley.

'On the contrary,' said Christopher, 'you will discuss it with me.'

Thornley glanced round the room. People were beginning to take an interest in his movements. Christopher followed his eyes.

'We can go outside,' he observed, 'or we can discuss it here. It's a matter of indifference to me; I like an audience.'

Thornley swallowed once and then followed him into the garden.

'And that's that,' said Timothy to Moira. 'I only hope that fellow hasn't got fatty degeneration of the heart. I hate inquests.'

Moira looked at him and laughed.

'I never could see what Felicity-Ann saw in him,' she confided.

'I think it was really what her mother saw.'

Netta sat alone on a chair by a palm and smiled at some beatific vision of her own.

She had, noticed Moira, discarded her very boyish and reckless air, and also her abbreviated skirts. She looked very sleek and satisfied, like a Persian kitten that has just managed to upset a work-basket.

'And I never fearfully liked Netta Coventry,' said Moira.

Timothy noticed that her eyes were almost purple and fringed with soft dark lashes. He began to dance with her again, and Felicity's pale face faded from his mind.

What occurred between Christopher and Thornley not even Timothy knew. Christopher was distinctly morose as they rowed back to the yacht, and went ashore early next morning with, as Timothy said, 'something of a hefty liver!' He returned at eleven o'clock, took his ukelele and was lost in melody for the rest of the morning.

But Felicity-Ann lay in bed watching the sun tint the dawn sky, and listening to the sleepy waking songs of the birds, wondering how she was going to explain to her mother her unprecedented action in leaving the dance unchaperoned. Mrs. Draycott had looked in at her door the night before, and Felicity-Ann had seen her grave and hurt expression. If there was one thing that broke Felicity-Ann's nerve it was that sort of expression. It was impossible to cope with anyone who looked grave and hurt. Felicity-Ann had occasionally wondered if her mother knew this, or if it was just natural to her. She wondered if it would be any good having a headache and not appearing at breakfast, but decided that it was only postponing the evil day. And then Thornley! Thornley had probably seen her mother last night. And Timothy and Christopher would probably go away now that they knew what an awful little liar she was. Her face crumpled up and she gave a small sob. Still, it was done now . . . and it had been wonderful while it lasted. And Netta Coventry would marry Thornley; because Felicity-Ann wasn't going to tell him that it had all started with Netta dropping her handkerchief into the harbour.

She heard the maids bustling about. She wished that they weren't so fearfully efficient and punctual. She wished they would be two hours late with breakfast . . . might as well wish for the moon!

But when she arrived at breakfast, it was obvious that her mother had not seen Thornley. She was, of course, inexpressibly

hurt at Felicity-Ann's behaviour in leaving without telling her, but she seemed to be under the impression that Felicity-Ann, in a transport of joy at Thornley's unexpected return, had let him escort her home. Felicity-Ann opened her mouth to speak, but when she saw the kindly understanding in her mother's eyes, again her courage failed.

Still Thornley would arrive soon, bearing thunderbolts, and the matter would finish. Felicity-Ann gave a little shiver.

It was one of those windless summer days when even the leaves hang motionless, and do not so much as quiver. 'At any rate,' thought Felicity-Ann, 'the yacht can't get away without any wind,' and she felt a little comforted. Then the front-door bell rang.

'Who can it be so early?' said Mrs. Draycott.

'It's probably Thornley,' said Felicity-Ann in a flat kind of voice.

Hannah the maid came in to say that Mr. Beard would like to see Miss Draycott.

That was funny, thought Felicity-Ann; she would have expected Thornley to have the execution with full canonicals, and in the presence of her mother. But she smiled palely and went in to see him.

Thornley was standing by the window. He did not look at all pompous—in fact he looked crestfallen—and when he saw Felicity-Ann standing in the doorway he actually blushed.

Felicity-Ann said nothing.

'I've come,' said Thornley nervously, 'to say . . . about last night . . . and everything . . . that I want to apologise.'

Felicity-Ann felt suddenly limp. After having been braced up to receive thunderbolts, to have this posy tossed gently at her feet completely upset her. She stared dumbly at him.

'I—I . . . I was misinformed,' said Thornley.

And Felicity-Ann, instead of feeling relieved, was filled with a black despair. Until that moment she had not realised how relieved she had been at the idea of no longer being engaged to Thornley.

A still small voice that she hardly recognised as her own answered him almost without her own volition.

'I think we had better break off our engagement,' said that strange voice. 'I think that we are not really suited to each other.'

And still in a kind of dream she pulled off her ring and held it out to him.

'But I say . . .' said Thornley. His expression of amazed

and wounded vanity was almost pathetic. He looked like a large and placid bull that had been prodded by a small boy.

'But I say . . . ' he said again.

A queer little smile flickered across Felicity-Ann's face.

She was burning her boats, and she would never be able to make her mother understand ; she would live on in the town and people would say that she had been jilted by Thornley . . . but, after all, what did it matter ? A clear flame of courage shot up in her. At least she had done it herself.

A dull red spread over Thornley's face, and he held out a large hand for the ring. She dropped it into his palm.

'I suppose it's one of those fellows,' he said sulkily ; 'well, I don't believe they're any good.'

He stalked out of the room and she heard the front door slam. And then, before her courage ebbed away she went to tell her mother.

She never forgot that interview ; never forgot her mother's face when the veil was dropped and she was neither grave nor hurt, but cold and bitter ; never forgot the words that stabbed her heart like rapier thrusts, the reproaches, the hysterical plaint that now they would be the laughing-stock of the place ; that she supposed Felicity-Ann thought the pension of an Army officer's widow lasted for ever, that she had spent far more than she should have in giving Felicity-Ann a chance to ~~make~~ a good marriage, and that now they were paupers more or less, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*.

'I can work,' said Felicity-Ann rather wildly and very youthfully.

'Tchah ! ' said Mrs. Draycott.

And then into the midst of it came Hannah to say that Mr. Marsden had called.

'Tell him to go away,' said Mrs. Draycott hysterically.

And Felicity-Ann saw the last gleam of sunlight fade out of her life.

And at last Mrs. Draycott wore herself out and called for Hannah, smelling salts, a darkened room and solitude.

Felicity-Ann went shakily into the cool dark hall, where a golden gleam of sunlight fell across the polished oak floor from the hall door as it stood ajar. Her eyes were red and swollen, her face white, and then someone seized both her hands.

'Oh, Felicity-Ann,' said Christopher, 'you darling !'

Stupid tears spurted out of her eyes.

'Christopher!' she said, and collapsed into a storm of sobs.

'Cheer up,' murmured Christopher; 'it's all right, Felicity-Ann.'

'Why did you come?' she muttered.

'Well,' said Christopher, and led her into the drawing-room, 'I met Thornley and I saw his face, and I thought that perhaps I might be needed.'

'But——,' said Felicity-Ann.

'Well, you see,' said Christopher, 'I didn't know whether you cared for him or not, and when I saw his face I knew that you didn't. So I came along because I care rather a lot. Felicity-Ann, do you think you could contemplate marrying me?'

'He came to apologise,' said Felicity-Ann irrelevantly.

'I thought he might,' said Christopher grimly. And then, 'Felicity-Ann, do you know it's past one o'clock, and I'm ravenous, and I couldn't possibly eat anything until you've answered my question?'

'Oh!' said Felicity-Ann, 'I love you.'

Christopher kissed her.

'But . . . but are you quite certain it's me? I thought that perhaps . . . Timothy. . . .'

'Quite, quite certain.'

'Listen,' he said; 'I've got quite a good lunch waiting on board the yacht, and I've also got my sister. She came down from town by car. I wired her because I thought we might need reinforcements. I suggest we have lunch and come back afterwards with explanations . . . and with my sister to explain that we are really *the* Tremlet Marsdens, scions of a noble family and quite eligible!' He smiled at her. 'Sounds snobbish, but in the circumstances I think it might ease matters, don't you?'

But Felicity-Ann only smiled.

'So long as it's you,' she said, 'I don't mind whether things are difficult or not.'

They went out into the warm sunlight, down to the harbour where the seagulls wheeled and screamed over the placid water that gurgled and crooned round the green piles of the pier.

Felicity-Ann looked over her shoulder towards Netta's house and smiled.

'If she marries Thornley,' said Christopher, 'we'll send her a box of handkerchiefs as a wedding present.'

JANE ENGLAND.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, UNDERGRADUATE.¹

IN a few years it will be two centuries since Samuel Johnson became an undergraduate at Pembroke College, Oxford. So near does he seem to us in so many ways that, in 1928, it will be hard to realise that, if you go back another 200 years, you reach a date that is sixty years before the Spanish Armada, thirty-six years before the birth of Shakespeare, and twenty-seven years before Ridley and Latimer were burned opposite Balliol.

Though Johnson, even as an undergraduate, seems near and known, yet it is only by antiquarian research that we can appreciate the material surroundings of Oxford, or of England, at the time. If any one desires to earn the gratitude of posterity, let him get a large blank book and write in it a detailed account of as many typical days of his ordinary life as he has patience for. No item of his bedroom, parlour, meals, travel, business, or amusement, should be omitted. Every ticket, bill, programme, or other document he gets, should be inserted. It will be to-day a thing of intolerable dullness. But let him, if the Trustees will accept it, deposit it in the British Museum for 200 years, and posterity will find it of momentous interest.

Those thoughts occurred to me as I tried to picture Johnson and his father journeying to Oxford at the end of October, 1728. I believe they would probably ride on horseback. That was the poor man's way of travel. You hired horses for successive stages at 3*d.* a mile. When Swift came to London in 1710 he narrates, in the opening of the *Journal to Stella*, how he rode for five days from Parkgate to London, and fell off his horse on the first day's ride to Chester. Well, then, how about luggage? Swift stayed three years in London, and in 1713 rode back to Parkgate. Probably his belongings went by water as, more than a century later, Mr. Jingle's phantom dress-suits went to Rochester. Johnson's few belongings would go by the waggon—one of those cumbrous vehicles with many horses that must have been on every English road throughout the eighteenth century.

If Michael Johnson and his hopeful son rode from Lichfield to Oxford, their way would be by Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham,

¹ A paper read to the Johnson Club in 1920 and now printed with a few alterations.

Henley in Arden, Stratford-on-Avon, Shipston, Chapel House,¹ and Woodstock. The whole distance is seventy-eight miles, and I suspect that they would stay a night at Stratford-on-Avon, which is as nearly as possible half-way, being thirty-eight miles from Lichfield and forty miles from Oxford. I do not remember that Johnson ever speaks of Shakespeare's birthplace. On his return from the Welsh tour with the Thrales, they passed through Stratford² on September 21, 1774, but Mrs. Thrale in her diary says nothing about the place. Boswell in 1769 regrets that he had not Johnson's company at the Stratford Jubilee. It may have been as well for him that he did not; for his performance there 'in the dress of an armed Corsican chief' must have strained the complacency with which Johnson forgave his too frequent absurdities.

If Johnson and his father rode thus to Oxford they would enter the City by St. Giles's. Whether they could recognise the place to-day, so much is it changed, I rather question. Beaumont Street did not exist. They would enter the Cornmarket under the narrow arch of Bocardo, still a prison. At Carfax the Conduit (now in the park at Nuneham Courtney), and Penniless Bench under the church tower, were conspicuous. St. Aldate's was then Fish Street. So much on their way to Pembroke. Elsewhere in Oxford the change is as great. East gate spanned the High street; the Angel Inn stood near Magdalen; Friar Bacon's study crowned Folly Bridge. And where the Radcliffe Camera rises in a noble space, there was but a cluster of narrow lanes and houses between Cat Street and Brasenose.

The spectacle of a fond father bringing his son to be entered at college was a favourite topic of satire and of caricature in the eighteenth century. Thomas Warton, in the 'Oxford Sausage,' uses it in 'The Progress of Discontent,' written in 1746—

'When now, mature in classic Knowledge,
The joyful Youth is sent to College,
His Father comes, a Vicar plain,
At Oxford bred—in Anna's reign,
And thus, in Form of humble Suitor,
Bowing, accosts a reverend Tutor.
"Sir, I'm a Glo'stershire Divine,
And this my eldest Son of nine;

¹ It was there that in 1776 he delivered to Boswell his encomium on 'capital taverns.' The great inn at Chapel House exists no more.

² And Boswell and he 'drank tea and coffee' there in 1776.

My wife's Ambition, and my own,
 Was that this Child should wear a Gown :
 I'll warrant that his good Behaviour
 Will justify your future Favour ;
 And, for his Parts, to tell the Truth,
 My son's a very forward Youth,"'

and so forth.

You will remember that Michael Johnson said his son was a forward youth. 'His father,' says Boswell, 'seemed very full of the merits of his son, and told the company he was a good scholar and wrote Latin verses.' And then the ungainly youth 'suddenly struck in and quoted Macrobius.' I should be inclined to make a small bet that hardly anyone in this company knows anything of Macrobius, except that Johnson quoted him on this notable occasion. I remember making an inquiry about him of the late Robinson Ellis, Corpus Professor of Latin. From the fact that he had by heart such things as Lycophron's Cassandra and the astronomical poems of Manilius, the Professor was reputed to be more than human. But the first words of his answer to me proved his essential humanity. For he began : 'Don't you remember that when Dr. Johnson . . .' What he further told me about Macrobius, or even whether he wrote in Greek or in Latin, I have clean forgotten. But Macrobius is dead, and I never saw anyone who even pretended to regret him. He is assured of a parasitic immortality, because a youth 'suddenly struck in and quoted' him on October 31, 1728, O.S.

Johnson was just turned nineteen when he matriculated. Even to-day that is beyond the average age, and at that time it was much above it. Jeremy Bentham was only twelve when he went to Queen's in 1760. Gibbon was fourteen when he matriculated at Magdalen in 1742, equipped, as he says, 'with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would be ashamed.' Gibbon records that he was excused, on account of his insufficient age, from subscribing to the Thirty-nine Articles, and told by the Vice-Chancellor to return and do so 'as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year.' Richard Bethell, of Wadham, entered at the age of fourteen in 1814. In 1863, as Lord Westbury, pursuing in the House of Lords his favourite pastime of badgering the bishops, he told them that the Vice-Chancellor had said to him, 'You are too young to take the oath of obedience to the Statutes of the University,

but you are quite old enough to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles.'

Gibbon, Bentham and Bethell were infant prodigies and went up unusually young. Johnson was a prodigy, but he went up unusually late. I fancy, however, that it was not only to his masterful personality and his physical bigness, but also to his superior age, that he owed his commanding position among his fellow-undergraduates. You will recollect how 'he was generally seen lounging at the college gate, with a circle of young students round him, whom he was entertaining with wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiriting them up to rebellion against the College discipline, which in his maturer years he so much extolled.' And Oliver Edwards, at that ever memorable meeting on Good Friday 1778, said, 'Sir, I remember you would not let us say *prodigious* at college. For even then, Sir,' turning to Boswell, 'he was delicate in language, and we all feared him.'

Of my own earliest experience of Oxford I most clearly recollect that I thought it was a very cold place. I remember sitting in the hall of Wadham, doing the papers of a joint scholarship examination, and being chilled to the marrow.¹ Oxford can be as cold a place as any in England. And Johnson at the start of his Oxford life must have found it so. You will recall that he told Boswell that six days after his first arrival he cut Mr. Jorden's lecture, and went sliding on Christchurch meadows. That would be November 6, O.S., or November 17 N.S.; and a frost that would make ice fit to bear Samuel Johnson must have been a sharp one. But this suggests to me a point on which the book stored in the British Museum might have helped us to realise that life in Oxford in 1728, if not 'nasty, brutish, and short,' was at any rate uncomfortable. I doubt whether until the opening of the Oxford Canal in 1790 there was much coal available in Oxford.² In Loggan's seventeenth century prints of the colleges you may see great stacks of wood in the backyards. In 'The Oxford Sausage' ('The Splendid Shilling')—

'the inclement Air

Persuades Men to repel benumbing Frosts

With pleasant Wines, and crackling Blaze of Wood.'

¹ Mr. Justice Roche endured the cold on the same occasion. I hope that Lord Birkenhead and the Headmaster of Eton in the year following, and Sir John Simon in the year after that, found this examination more genial physically.

² Note, however, that, on November 6, 1758, James Woodforde, Undergraduate of New College, paid 4s. 9d. for 'a sack of coal.' *The Diary of a Country Parson*, Oxford University Press, (1924), p. 11.

And in the same poem a man in college, to avoid a dun, takes refuge not in his coal-hole, but

‘ to the dark recess I fly
Of Wood-hole.’

And if Oxford was cold in 1728, I believe it was also very noisy. We who live in London, the quietest city in the world, are apt to forget how much noise can be made by iron horse-shoes and iron-shod wheels, upon pavements of cobble-stones. That thought occurred to me not long ago when, amid the din of Edinburgh, I saw men banging in granite setts in Charlotte Square, and recalled the Oxford eighteenth century epigram on a fat man :

‘ When Tadlow walks the Streets, the Paviers cry
“ God bless you, Sir ! ” and lay their Rammers by.’

When the Paviers were at work they apparently hung up a bundle of straw as a sign of the way being obstructed. Gay in his ‘ Trivia ’ (1716), writes :

‘ Does not each Walker know the morning Sign,
When Wisps of Straw depend upon the Twine
‘ Cross the close Street ; that then the Pavior’s Art
Renews the Ways, deny’d to Coach and Cart ? ’

You may to-day when upon the Thames see a bundle of straw hung on the underside of a bridge, as a sign that the bridge is being painted or repaired. And that, so far as I know, is the only survival of a custom of which I know not the origin.

Lastly, to have done with streets, there were rarely foot-pavements or side walks. The cobble-stones stretched from one side of the street to the other, sloping to the kennel that ran along the middle. Such cobbles, and a kennel, survive at least in one place in Oxford—in Brasenose Lane. And there were posts at intervals, on the line of a modern side-walk, to keep vehicles away from walkers. Gay, in the poem I have just mentioned, refers many times to these posts. And these were the posts upon every one of which Dr. Johnson was seen to lay his hand, turning back to do so if he missed one, ‘ in Bedford Street opposite Henrietta Street.’

Let me add two more of the sort of details of which the stored-up book might inform us. Johnson and his undergraduate friends slept upon wooden beds. Thomas Hearne enters in his diary on October 3, 1733 : ‘ I hear of iron bedsteads in London. Dr. Massey said they were used on account of buggs, which have, since

the great Fire, been very troublesome in London.' Secondly, Johnson and his undergraduate friends all wore wigs. One of the sets of verses in 'The Oxford Sausage' is 'An Ode to a Grizzle Wig by a Gentleman who had just left off his Bob,' and in it is a reference to Baylis, Blenkinsop, and Wise, who in a note are described as 'eminent Peruke-makers of Oxford.' Shenstone, who went up to Pembroke in 1732, is said to have been the first man who wore his own hair. But that means he wore it powdered. For Walter Savage Landor, who matriculated at Trinity in 1793, was the first undergraduate who wore his own hair without powder.

To wear a wig at that time exposed a man to dangers from which even the barrister is now exempt. Gay in his 'Trivia,' speaking of the risks of a crowd, writes :

'Nor is thy Flaxen Wigg with Safety worn ;
High on the Shoulder, in the Basket born,
Lurks the sly Boy ; whose Hand to Rapine bred
Plucks off the curling Honours of the Head.'¹

I do not know it for a fact, but I suspect that the last man who wore a wig in Oxford was Routh, President of Magdalen for sixty-three years, who died at the age of ninety-nine in 1854. To the last he was dressed daily in the full canonicals of the age of Queen Anne,—that is, in the aspect of Swift as we picture him. I know an old gentleman who was a Magdalen undergraduate under Routh. So he knew Routh ; and Routh saw Dr. Johnson in the flesh on the steps of University, that college celebrated as the spot where Johnson drank three bottles of port 'without being the worse for it.' Let me add one similar example of 'Links with the Past,' as the papers like to call them. When I was a youth I once met an old man, 'old as forty hills,' who was Bishop of Chichester, and Durnford by name. He has left on record that his father was a Pembroke undergraduate when Johnson and Boswell came to Oxford in November 1784. Dr. Adams, the Master, invited young Durnford to meet the great man. And he remembered how when Boswell, after a temporary absence, re-entered the room, he came in saying eagerly : 'Has he said anything ?'

Changes in the aspect of the colleges since 1728 have been least in the smaller and less wealthy ones. The least changed of all, probably, is Wadham, which is therefore, to my mind, as beautiful as any to-day. Pembroke, for a small college, is a good deal altered.

¹ The sly boy was still playing this trick some forty years later. See J. T. Smith, *Nollekens and his Times*, edited by Whitten (1920), vol. i. p. 380.

What was their hall is now the Library,¹ where there is the MS. of Johnson's 'Prayers and Meditations,' given by George Strahan. There is a modern hall which the most loyal Pembroke man cannot describe as beautiful. When Johnson went up the college had no chapel, and used the South aisle of St. Aldate's church. But a chapel was building throughout his time of residence. Hearn records in his Diary that 'it was begun in the Spring of 1728 and was consecrated on July 10, 1732.' As Johnson went down in December, 1729, he can only have worshipped in this, the present chapel, during his later visits to Oxford. The Common Room, of which Johnson said to Boswell, 'Ay, here I used to play at draughts with Phil Jones and Fludyer,' was pulled down in 1869. There was then no distinction, at any rate at Pembroke, between Senior and Junior Common Rooms. Dons and undergraduates used the same, and I am not sure if it would not be a salutary practice to-day. I dare to say this, notwithstanding the recorded decision of the great man :

'Dr. Adams told us, that in some of the colleges at Oxford, the Fellows had excluded the students from social intercourse with them in the common room.

Johnson : They are in the right, Sir : there can be no real conversation, no fair exertion of mind amongst them, if the young men are by ; for a man who has a character does not choose to stake it in their presence.

Boswell : But, Sir, may not there be very good conversation without a contest for superiority ?

Johnson : No animated conversation, Sir, for it cannot be but one or other will come off superiour. I do not mean that the victor must have the better of the argument, for he may take the weak side ; but his superiority of parts and knowledge will necessarily appear ; and he to whom he thus shows himself superiour is lessened in the eyes of the young men.'

Johnson's rooms over the gateway were then at the top of the tower. They are now, by the later addition of another storey, on the second floor. The tower has been so changed by alteration, and the interior by renovation, that his room has now a modern and uninteresting aspect. Mr. Maclean, the historian of Pembroke, records, upon the authority of an old college servant who survived until 1833, that when Johnson came to Pembroke for the last time, in 1784, he wished to see his room again, and as he was then

¹ The library of Pembroke was originally in a room over the south aisle of St. Aldate's church. It was moved in 1710 to what is now a lecture room, and on the building of the new hall was again moved to the old hall.

unwieldy and infirm the porter had to push him up the narrow staircase from behind.

Johnson resided continuously from November 1, 1728, until December 12, 1729. The common notion as to his poverty, largely based upon the celebrated incident about the shoes, is probably exaggerated, and Birkbeck Hill's investigation of the Pembroke buttery books confirms this. Prices, it must be remembered, were then very low. I find in a return of expenses at Greenwich Hospital that in 1729 butter cost 4½d. a pound, shoes 4s. a pair, stockings 1s. 9d. a pair, and a suit of clothes £2 12s. If shoes only cost 4s. a pair I fancy Johnson's indignation at the officious kindness of his benefactor may have been because he preferred the comfort of his old pair, and disliked the imputation that they looked shabby. Birkbeck Hill found that Johnson's weekly battels ranged from 7s. 11d. to 12s. 6d. It is on record that a Commoner's expenses at Hart Hall, from June to September, 1723, were only £7 17s. 1d., of which £3 16s. 11d. represented commons and battels. A fellowship at that time was only worth about £60 a year, and Johnson in 1776 said to Boswell, 'A hundred a year is reckoned a good fellowship.'

Carlyle, in a passage of inaccuracy unusual even for him, overdoes the poverty, and calls Johnson 'the poor servitor.' But Carlyle knew little, and probably cared less, about Oxford. Sir John Hawkins was also ignorant of Oxford ways; for he speaks of Johnson as wearing 'a scholar's gown.' So far was Johnson from being 'a poor servitor' that I am afraid he shared something of the contempt of the better-to-do for that unlucky class. You will remember how it was the duty, at Pembroke, of a servitor to knock at the men's doors at ten at night, and see if they were within, and how Johnson 'would join with others of the young men in college, in hunting, as they called it, the servitor who was thus diligent in his duty, and this they did with the noise of pots and candlesticks, singing to the tune of Chevy Chase the words in the old ballad:

"To drive the deer with hound and horn."

Oddly enough, Whitefield, who was a servitor at Pembroke after Johnson went down, mentions this curious duty of knocking at the doors (a practice, I think, peculiar to Pembroke), and says, 'I thought the devil would appear to me every stair I went up.' I wonder if Whitefield would have run faster from the devil, or from Samuel Johnson armed with a pot and a candlestick!

An undergraduate's time is commonly divided between study and amusement. The method of study in 1729 was unsystematic; and, if Gibbon's account of the ways of Magdalen in 1742 is accurate, you could apparently be as idle as you liked. Johnson, as we know, attended a few lectures, when he was so inclined, and wrote copies of verses. As one of these, however, was a translation of the whole of Pope's 'Messiah,' a poem of 108 lines, such exercises at times exceeded anything I knew of in my day.

'Sir,' said this difficult undergraduate to poor Jorden, 'you have sconded me twopence for non-attendance at a lecture not worth a penny.' There is a curious item in the history of words implicit here. The Oxford word 'sconce' meant 'to impose a fine,' as this passage shows. Johnson in the Dictionary calls it 'a low word which ought not to be retained.' Nowadays—but who am I to say nowadays?—when I was up thirty years ago, its use had become limited to one sort of fine only, namely when a man committed some social offence in hall, and a huge flagon of beer was ordered at his expense by the head of the table for general consumption. So little did the true meaning of the word survive that 'sconce' had come to be the name of the pot of beer. So we spoke of 'flooring the sconce.' The offender, who drank first, 'floored the sconce' if he emptied the whole measure without pausing to take breath. The feat was supposed to confer upon him some privilege of reprisal. What exactly that right was I never knew. For I saw the feat accomplished only once, by a German baron, and at its conclusion he was in no condition to assert any rights, or indeed to do anything but stagger out and be sick in the garden.

One word more as to studies. There were no examinations for your degree. They were not instituted until 1802, and classes were only introduced in 1807. There was, indeed, an ancient form of examination; but it was a form and a farce. In 1770 John Scott of University College (afterwards Lord Eldon) took his degree, and this is his account of the farce. 'I was examined in Hebrew and in History. "What is the Hebrew for a place of a skull?" I replied, "Golgotha." "Who founded University College?" I stated that King Alfred founded it. "Very well, Sir," said the examiner, "you are competent for your degree."'

The amusements of undergraduates in the early part of the eighteenth century were also more limited than to-day. There was printed in 'Notes and Queries' in 1860 the diary of Erasmus Philipps, who became a Gentleman Commoner of Pembroke in

August, 1720. He was of the family of Welsh baronets still, I think, surviving, and one of those men of whom one can say that they alone know how to spell their surnames with approximate accuracy. Philipps goes to horse-races on Port Meadow, where 'Plates' are run for. After one of these there is 'a Foot race between several Taylors for Geese, etc.' He goes fox-hunting. An entry in August 1722, 'Paid Mr. Reece, the Painter, £3 8s. for a horse,' may support the point I made before as to the cheapness of things then, even though the entry continues that the horse 'died after riding about ten miles.' He rides to race-meetings at Burford, Woodstock, and Bicester. He attends 'the Great Cock Match in Holywell, fought between the Earl of Plymouth and the Town Cocks, which beat his Lordship.' Occasionally he goes on the river, at one time taking his father to 'Newnam,' and remarking 'this is a most agreeable Passage.' Another time he goes up the river with some Pembroke men, and 'we landed and dressed a leg of mutton, which afterwards we dispatched in the wherry.' Another time he went with some friends 'to Godstow by water, taking Musick & Wine with us.' An outing of this sort was called 'a scheme.' So in the 'Ode to a Grizzle Wig' that I quoted before, there are the lines :

'Woodstock, farewell! and Wallingford, adieu!
Where many a Scheme reliev'd the lingering Day.'

Philipps also dances. 'At night went to the Ball at the Angel. A Guinea touch.' He and some other bloods give balls for their lady friends, whom he names. One of these was Miss Stonehouse, whose home was the house at Radley that is now Radley School, and another Miss 'Brigandine.'¹ Until modern times there survived, and for aught I know there survives still, an old pane of glass in University College upon which was scratched with a diamond a poor verse in praise of 'charming Pen Stonehouse' and 'divine Nanny Brigantine.'¹ Finally upon October 1, 1722, Philipps leaves Oxford, and goes to Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn, where was his father's town house, and where, about ninety years later, Lucy Steele was staying to the discomfiture of Elinor Dashwood.

In these elegant diversions of Gentlemen Commoners I suppose Johnson would have no share. Perhaps he watched the horse-

¹ The late John Sargeaunt pointed out to me that these are undergraduate ways of spelling 'Brickenden.' The 'divine Nanny' was no doubt one of the seven children of Colwell Brickenden (1664-1714), Master of Pembroke from 1710 to 1714.

races on Port Meadow, or a cock-fight in Holywell. Hearne, in his diary, on December 31, 1729, writes :

'On Monday last was to have been a prize-fighting in Oxford between two fellows, and they had it cryed about with beat of drum for some time ; the Mayor, Sir Oliver Greenaway, having given them leave ; but they having no leave from the Vice-Chancellor, the same was stopt.'

I suppose there may have been fights for which the Vice-Chancellor did give permission, that Johnson could see. You will remember that Mrs. Piozzi says, 'Mr. Johnson was very conversant in the art of attack and defence by boxing.'

'Here,' said Johnson, when showing Hannah More over Pembroke in 1782, 'here we walked, there we played cricket.' This, I feel sure, was only what we should now call stump cricket ; partly because there is no space within Pembroke for a more elaborate game, and partly because in 1729 cricket had only the sort of status that rounders has now, as a game for boys. Even so, it is pleasant to think of Johnson playing stump cricket : but did he ever see the ball, let alone hitting it ? ¹

There were other forms of amusement of a quieter kind. Erasmus Philipps on July 13, 1721, 'Went to the Tuns, with Tho. Beale, Esq. (Gent. Commoner),' and two other 'Pembrokiens, where we motto'd, Epigrammatiz'd, etc.' And on August 17, 1721, he went to the Poetical Club at the Tuns, where he met Dr. Evans of St. John's and another don, of Balliol, members of the club. There he 'drank Gallicia Wine, and was entertained with two Fables of the Doctor's Composition, which were indeed masterly. But the Dr. is allowed to have a peculiar knack and to excell all mankind at a Fable.' I am not sure if this Dr. Evans is he who figures last of those who were damned in a distich :

'Alma novem genuit celebres Rhedycina poetas,
Bubb, Stubb, Grubb, Crabb, Trapp, Young, Carey, Tickell, Evans.'

The production of light verse has always, I fancy, been greater at Oxford and Cambridge than anywhere else in the United Kingdom. To-day the undergraduate reads Mr. Godley's verses in the Oxford Magazine, instead of listening to them at the Tuns over a bottle of Gallicia Wine. And how well the twentieth century can hold its own, in this respect, against the eighteenth, will, I think, be

¹ 'He never joined with the other boys in their ordinary diversions. . . . His defective sight, indeed, prevented him from enjoying the common sports.' *Hill's Life*, vol. i. p. 48.

allowed by anyone who compares the two volumes of 'Echoes from the Oxford Magazine' with the pedestrian dullness of 'The Oxford Sausage,' or of 'The Companion to the Guide, and Guide to the Companion.'

A good deal more of beer was consumed in the taverns than of Galicia Wine. And the drinking was not always spiced by Mottoing, Epigrammatizing, or the recital of Fables. You may remember a really deplorable picture drawn by Charles Moritz in his 'Travels in England in 1795.' Moritz was walking into Oxford on a Sunday evening; he did most of his journey on foot, and experienced that contempt for wayfarers on foot which is apparent in 'Joseph Andrews,' 'The Spiritual Quixote,' and other stories of the road. Upon his way he fell in with a clerical fellow named Maud. When they reached Oxford at midnight, Maud took him into the Mitre, where, to his astonishment, he found 'a great number of clergymen all with their gowns and bands on, sitting round a large table, each with his pot of beer.' The futile inanities of their conversation, as Moritz records it, could hardly be equalled in a party of touts and stable-boys on their way to a race-meeting. Finally, at an advanced hour of the morning, the crapulent crew dispersed, when the Reverend Mr. Maud suddenly exclaimed, 'God damn me! I must read prayers this morning at All Souls.'

When I first thought about a subject for this paper I had, as one idea, that of tracing the careers of Johnson's undergraduate contemporaries. But it did not seem promising. Most of them, like most undergraduates of their time, became parsons. There was Francis Potter, afterwards Archdeacon of Taunton, and William Vyse, Archdeacon of Salop, and Bloxham, and Phil Jones, all parsons. There was Fludyer, the other player at draughts, who had a living at Putney, and was denounced by Johnson to Boswell as a scoundrel, though for no other reason, so far as I know, than because 'he became a violent Whig.' There was Meeke, whose superiority in his College exercises roused Johnson's jealousy. Mild Mr. Meeke (can he have been otherwise?) became a parson and a don of Pembroke.

And here let me digress to utter my gratitude to Providence that Johnson was saved from becoming a don, and thereby, of course, a clerical don, and from spending his life at Oxford with an end as Rector of Sibstone in Leicestershire, which I think is the best Pembroke living. If that had happened, it is difficult to suppose that we should have had any of the Johnsonian literature

of Boswell, Mrs. Piozzi, Madame d'Arblay, or even Hawkins. We might know less of him than of Thomas Warton, who had a biographer in Bishop Mant, but survives chiefly from his friendship with Johnson. Or perhaps there might be some such fragmentary tradition of Johnson's talk as is now attached to the nineteenth-century name of Henry Smith of Balliol.

In an early passage in the 'Tour to the Hebrides' Boswell makes Johnson say that he knew Whitefield at Pembroke. That must be a mistake. Johnson almost certainly went down in December 1729, and did not revisit Oxford until 1754. But Whitefield only went up in 1732, as did Richard Graves—who later ridiculed Whitefield in that curious and entertaining book 'The Spiritual Quixote'—and Shenstone.

But of all Johnson's contemporaries at Pembroke we are most indebted to Oliver Edwards, not only for his own priceless remark about 'cheerfulness breaking in,' but because he afforded to Boswell the opportunity to display the supreme example of his art.

Oliver Edwards is not in the 'Dictionary of National Biography.' Boswell tells us that he lived at Stevenage, and came to his office in Barnard's Inn about twice a week. I should like to know more about him. In a curious recess in the upper regions of the Inner Temple Library there is an incomplete collection of old Law Lists. In that for 1783, five years after his famous meeting with Johnson, he is entered as practising at 4 Lyon's Inn. In 1785 he is at Staple Inn. In 1793, which is the next available issue, his name does not appear. That is all I can find: it shows, at any rate, that he survived Johnson.

Of Johnson's contemporaries at other colleges let me refer to one only. William Pitt, who was born less than a year before Samuel Johnson, matriculated at Trinity as a Gentleman Commoner in 1727. (I had for two years the privilege of living in a set of rooms that, I believe, were occupied by that great man.) I do not suppose the Gentleman Commoner of Trinity ever came across the Commoner of Pembroke. Nor do I know of any record of their later meeting when both had become diversely famous. But there was one curious link between them. The eloquence of Lord Chatham is praised to a degree that is almost fabulous. But is there any utterance of his better known, or more effective, than this?

'The atrocious crime of being a young man, which the honourable gentleman has with such spirit and decency charged upon me, I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny, but I content myself

with wishing that I may be one of those whose follies cease with their youth, and not of that number who are ignorant in spite of experience.'

And that purple patch was written by Samuel Johnson in 'The Debates of the Senate of Lilliput' in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of November 1741. (You will find it in vol. xi. at page 569. The name of the speaker is given as 'Urg: Ptiti.') I believe it owes as much to Johnson and as little to Chatham as the funeral oration owes all to Thucydides and nothing to Pericles.

I must abstain from the temptation to say anything of Johnson's later visits to Oxford. They began in 1754, and between then and his death he went up about sixteen times, sometimes for long periods. I must, I say, abstain, not because it is beyond my professed subject—for you will already have observed the licence of discursiveness with which I indulge myself—but because this paper already grows too long. If I yield to the temptation for a moment, 'more particularly am I bound to mention' his visits to Trinity, where Bennet Langton and Topham Beauclerk were both undergraduates, and Thomas Warton a Fellow, and how in 1754 he said to Boswell, 'if I come to live at Oxford, I shall take up my abode in Trinity.' The college fitly possesses,¹ in the Senior Common Room, a portrait of Johnson, attributed, I know not how correctly, to Romney, and hanging near the magnificent portrait of Thomas Warton by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

I seem to remember that Hawkins says somewhere that Johnson set little store by his title of Doctor. He was made LL.D. by Trinity College, Dublin, in 1765, which was about the time when he first knew the Thrales. In her diary of the tour in Wales from July to September 1774 Mrs. Thrale speaks of him always as 'Mr. Johnson.' And in her 'Anecdotes' she calls him indifferently 'Mr. Johnson' or 'Dr. Johnson,' sometimes on the same page. I imagine that Johnson was much more proud of becoming 'Doctor in Civil Law' of Oxford in 1775. That his was an Oxford degree would by later usage have been apparent on the title pages of Boswell, Mrs. Piozzi, Hawkins, and Murphy: for they would have printed 'Samuel Johnson, D.C.L.' and not, as each of them does,

¹ In 1769 Johnson sent to the library of Trinity a Baskerville *Virgil* published in 1767. Boswell prints his letter to Warton, dated May 31, 1769, which accompanied the book. He also quotes in a foot-note the inscription in the book, which he gives thus—'Hunc Librum D.D. Samuel Johnson, eo quod hic loci studiis interdum vacaret.' In fact the inscription is—'1775. Hunc librum D.D. Samuel Johnson LL.D. quod hic loci studiis interdum vacaret.' The writing is not Johnson's, and the date 1775 is written with a different pen and ink.

'Samuel Johnson, LL.D. But in their day, and till much later, it was the fashion for the 'Doctor in Jure Civili' of Oxford to call himself LL.D. and not D.C.L.¹

But I said I would not yield further to the temptation to digress. Let me, as I conclude, beg pardon of my readers, but especially of the Cambridge men among them, if so much of Oxonian enthusiasm may have been a little trying. To the latter I may palliate the offence, though not excuse it as my own, if I remind them of a passage in Mrs. Piozzi's 'Anecdotes.' 'Dr. Johnson delighted in his own partiality for Oxford, and one day, at my house, entertained five members of the other university with various instances of the superiority of Oxford, enumerating the gigantic names of many men whom it had produced, with apparent triumph.'²

But further to assuage the feelings of the Cambridge men, let me end with some words of Johnson himself, in an *Idler*, in which the names and virtues of both universities are united, as in everything but friendly rivalry they should always be. If I were a Cambridge man the comment I should make upon the passage would be that, whereas Johnson cites as typical sons of Cambridge two giants indeed, he can balance them on the side of Oxford only with the names of two obsolete theologians. His words are these :

'There is at Oxford and Cambridge at least one very powerful incentive to learning, I mean the *Genius of the Place*. It is a sort of inspiring deity, which every youth of quick sensibility and ingenious disposition creates to himself, by reflecting that he is placed under those venerable walls, where a Hooker and a Hammond, a Bacon and a Newton, once pursued the same course of science, and from whence they soared to the most elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which Tully, according to his own testimony, experienced at Athens, when he contemplated the porticos where Socrates sat, and the laurel groves where Plato disputed.'

F. D. MACKINNON.

¹ Sir Christopher Robinson (Magdalen, D.C.L., 1796), when he published his Reports in 1812, described himself on his title page as 'Christopher Robinson LL.D.' John Dodson (Oriel, D.C.L., 1808), when he published his Reports in 1815, put on his title page 'John Dodson, LL.D.' But William Robinson (Balliol, D.C.L. 1829), when he published his Reports in 1844, called himself on his title page 'William Robinson, D.C.L.' So the fashion changed between 1815 and 1844.

² At a meeting of the Johnson Club in December 1922 Mr. Asquith, as an honoured guest, read us a Paper. In the subsequent discussion Mr. Birrell speculated upon a meeting between Johnson and Mr. Asquith, and wondered what they would talk about. When he came to reply Mr. Asquith said that he felt sure that before long Johnson and he would be congratulating one another 'upon having escaped the irreparable misfortune of being educated at Cambridge.'

THE KISS.

BY A. E. SNODGRASS.

In the chain of life the kiss is a powerful link ; it always has been down recorded history. It has meant all things to all men and to all women. Its compass ranges on a crescendo scale from the kiss of Judas to the first kiss a mother impresses on her new-born babe. The kiss can be holy, it can be profane ; it can be honest, or, peradventure, dishonest. In France it is a courteous salute between man and man ; in England it might, similarly, be an insult. There is the kiss of convention when women meet or separate ; there is the kiss of perdition when the perjurer's lips touch the Bible. There is the little staccato kiss of mere innocent, spontaneous joy ; there is the riper Byronic vintage

'Which melts like kisses from a female mouth.'

The kiss, indeed, runs in harness with the team of human feelings. It haunts our emotions, emphasises our vices, adorns our virtues. It is a saint and a sinner, a pleader and a revolutionist, an anodyne, a narcotic, a poison, a salve. It is Christ, and, verily, it can be anti-Christ.

A considerable literature belongs to the kiss, and it has at least one serious historian. 'It is as old as the creation,' says Haliburton, the 'Sam Slick' of law and letters, 'and yet as young and fresh as ever. It pre-existed, still exists, and always will exist. Depend upon it, Eve learned it in Paradise, and was taught its beauties, virtues, and varieties by an angel, there is something so transcendent in it.' Swift, of course, must gibe at the kiss—'Lord, I wonder what fool it was that first invented kissing !' But he found it a custom not neglected either in Liliput or Brobdingnag. As for the novelists, past and present, they are wholesale merchants in kisses, offering, like a well-known pickle firm, '57 varieties.'

To the poets kisses are as a draught of wine to the lips of Bacchus. They call them 'love's great artillery,' 'the seals of love,' the 'blossom of love.' To Herrick they were 'the sure sweet sement, glue, and lime of love.' Shelley sings of the 'soft and sweet eclipse when soul meets soul on lovers' lips.' There is a gentle throb in that line of Keats—'the warm tremble of a devout kiss,' and a more passionate one in Byron's—

'A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth and love.'

Byron also noticed that 'kiss' rhymes to 'bliss' in fact as well as verse, and Ben Jonson thought 'a soft lip would tempt you to eternity of kissing.' What more beautiful, too, than the latter's plea to Celia—

'Drink to me only with thine eyes
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.'

Shakespeare unveils the varied mysteries of kissing. Thus the kiss of dignity—

'With this kiss take my blessing,
God protect thee!'

The kiss of passion—

'Then he kissed me hard, as if he plucked up kisses by the roots that grew upon my lips.'

Or again—

'Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,
Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.'

Swinburne's boundless soul of fervid sentiment could not avoid the kiss. He apostrophises the 'sweet red splendid kissing mouth,' and, in a more ethereal mood, ruminates—

'A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink
Might tempt, should Heaven see meet,
An angel's lips to kiss, methink,
A baby's feet.'

Tennyson illuminates the magic of the kiss—

'O Love, O fire! once he drew
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.'

In 'Locksley Hall' we have—

'And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.'
And elsewhere that exquisite thought—

'Dear as remembered kisses after Death.'

Longfellow has this well-cut gem in 'The Spanish Student'—

'Pray shut thy window close;
I am jealous of the perfumed air of night
That from this garden climbs to kiss thy lips.'

In lighter vein there is Moore's epigram—

"I never give a kiss," says Prue,
 "To naughty man, for I abhor it."
 She will not *give* a kiss, 'tis true;
 She'll *take* one, though, and thank you for it!

Petrucio in besieging his Kate brought into operation the full artillery of the kiss. Did he not 'take his bride about the neck,'

'And kiss'd her lips with such a clamorous smack,
 That, at the parting, all the church did echo?'

And let us not forget the words of Charles Buxton, the M.P. and writer (1823-71), who wrote: 'You would think if our lips were made of horn and stuck out a foot or two from our faces, kisses at any rate would be done for. Not so. No creatures kiss each other so much as the birds.'

In these analytical days when everything is dissected from dynasties to dynamos and everything gets into the 'shop window' of publicity from diaries to dairies, the kiss is somewhat of a neglected topic. Curious, this, as it is ever on the public mouth and is persistently in the public eye on the stage and at the pictures. Recently burglars have been experimenting with it, and quite logically: it has broken millions of hearts, why not a few doors, or safes?

In our world that's all a stage the kiss indeed plays many parts, its acts being strange and diverse. One evening a few weeks ago I encountered some of its vagaries in the fashion I will relate.

At the hour of dusk, I was idly rummaging in the twopenny box outside a second-hand bookseller's shop in a great northern city. The shop stood a few paces from the roar of the traffic, on the edge of a mean area that crowded on to the back of a huge hotel as if taunting its grandiloquent air of luxury. Two little dots of slum children were playing on the pavement. They were sharing sweets from a tiny paper bag. They kissed each other—quaint dabs of osculation—in the great joy of the tiny feast. It was a kiss of innocent happiness defying the squalor of life. Before passing on I bought at random an old CORNHILL MAGAZINE which, torn and frayed, did not look at all happy amid the weird congregation of all sorts and conditions of twopenny companions. Somehow the buff cover seemed to waft me a kiss of recognition, a kiss for old time's sake.

I wandered on with my purchase. A few yards down the steep, nearer the whirl of motor cars and the dazzle of lights, a limousine

drew up at the side of the vast hotel with a kind of hurricane silence. A beautiful woman in evening gown tripped out; a tall man at her heels. The door was slammed. Over the dropped window a dainty little girl in velvet and furs peeped out. There were tears in her eyes.

'Oh, can't I come with you, mamma?'

'No, Doris, you must go home to bed. Nurse, see she does. No nonsense.'

She kissed the child's forehead with all the fervour of an iceberg kissing the North Pole. Up the street the slum kids were shouting and laughing with joyous eyes and with mouths chockful of sweets. The big limousine drove off. The unmotherly kiss of the kill-joy had been delivered.

These kisses began to obsess. Meandering next into a railway station, whose name from Panama to Poplar is more familiar even than that of the seaport itself, I perceived that I had walked into a very hive of kisses. But for the noise which trains will make you could have heard them. There were arrival kisses and departure kisses, the kisses of relatives and the kisses of lovers. It was like a Kissing Cup's Race. One man in great excitement at meeting a lady divinely tall with soft glinting eyes seemed about to kiss the porter too, but recovered himself in time and gave him a tip instead. I suppose this kind of thing is always going on, I thought; so usual that one does not notice it.

Half an hour later, eating a lonely chop in the buzzing grill-room of the railway hotel, I casually looked at the magazine I had bought. Truly life is much addicted to the coincidence. On a yellow sheet enfolded among the advertisement pages I lighted on an essay—an essay on kissing! It advertised a perfume of the period—the year 1875. But it was a real 'find,' for surely one could not possibly discover it in the sedate orthodox bound volumes.

'Sweet Psidium,' this yellow leaflet announced, was 'quite unique' and was equally 'quite' the fashion of the season.

'Tis the fragrantest scent ever known
on this planet,
'Tis the essence divine of the bloom
of pomegranate;
The ladies who with it their pretty
skins sprinkle,
Will ne'er have a care, or a trouble,
or wrinkle.'

To allure people to purchase this wonderful perfume, which, it was stated, was distilled only at the 'Royal Laboratory of Flowers' in New Bond Street, the publicity agent of that day, with a truly Byronic appreciation of the subtlety of things, allied the two kindred senses of touch and smell and confronted the public with a dissertation entitled 'The Science of Kissing.' Here is his 'scientific' lecture, a notable amalgam too good to be lost in a fly leaf :

'People will kiss, yet not one in a hundred knows how to extract bliss from lovely lips, any more than he knows how to make diamonds from charcoal. And yet it is easy. First know whom you are going to kiss. Don't make a mistake, although a mistake may be good. The gentleman should be a little taller. He should have a clean face, a kind eye, and a mouth full of expression. Don't kiss everybody. Don't sit down to it; stand up. Take the left hand of the lady in your right; let your hat go—any place out of the way; place the left hand gently over the shoulder of the lady, and let it fall down the right side, towards the belt. Don't be in a hurry; draw her gently, lovingly, to your heart. Her head will fall lightly upon your shoulder—and a handsome shoulder-strap it makes. Don't be in a hurry; send a little life down your left arm. Her left hand is in your right; let there be an impression to that, not like the grip of a vice, but a gentle clasp, full of elasticity, thought, and respect.

'Don't be in a hurry. Her head lies carelessly on your shoulder. You are nearly heart to heart. Look down into her half-closed eyes. Gently, yet manfully, press her to your bosom. Stand firm. Be brave, but don't be in a hurry. Her lips are almost open. Lean slightly forward with your head, not the body. Take good aim; the lips meet; the eyes close; the heart opens; the soul rides the storms, troubles, and sorrows of life (don't be in a hurry); heaven opens before you; the world shoots under your feet, as a meteor flashes across the evening sky (don't be afraid); the nerves dance before the just erected altar of love, as zephyrs dance with the dew-trimmed flowers; the heart forgets its bitterness, and the art of kissing is learned. No fuss, no noise, no fluttering. Kissing doesn't hurt; it don't require a brass band to make it legal.'

Whether after reading this effusion people rushed to buy 'Sweet Psidium' I do not know, but it certainly must have tended to create that atmosphere of sentiment which might easily allure to the scent counter. And sentiment is surely the handmaiden of kissing.

A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION.

By LAURENCE KIRK.

IN every House of Commons there is always one member who is perpetually seeking unnecessary information on awkward subjects, and in every Government there is always one Minister whose job is to see that he does not get it. The question and answer are both worded in such a way as to give the illusion that each gentleman is animated by no other motive than a burning desire to promote the welfare of the community; but in reality they are each filled with a burning desire to score off one another, and the community can go to blazes, as far as they care, while they continue this attractive game of catch as catch can. For it is an attractive game. Those lofty sentiments and resounding phrases hold endless possibilities for getting in a sly personal dig; and there is nothing more satisfying than a really good dig at someone you don't like, especially when it is delivered in round official language with the Speaker as referee.

The kind of thing that happens is something like this. The Member for West Bouroughdean gets up on his hind legs, and after clearing his throat to make way for his well-known rich melodious tones, proceeds to ask the Minister for Technical Administration whether it is true that a labourer named Henry Wood was on the 27th of May forcibly removed from the office of the Local Inspector at Highbury without any adequate reason being given, and, if so, whether the Government have taken any steps to order an inquiry into the matter or to indemnify Mr. Wood for the gross indignity suffered. At this the Minister for Technical Administration promptly gets up and without a moment's hesitation 'refers the Hon. Member to the reply given to the Hon. Member for South Hartlepool on the 10th of December.' That settles the matter; for by the time the Hon. Member has looked up the reply in question—which, by the way, is to the effect that 'His Majesty's Government have no knowledge of any such occurrence'—the opportunity for a supplementary question has slipped by. One up to the Minister for Technical Administration! The facts of the case, as he well knew, were that something very similar to what was

suggested did occur, only it took place on the 26th instead of the 27th of May, and Mr. Wood's Christian name was Charles, and not Henry. These inaccuracies were sufficient to enable him to answer as he did, and the answer was strictly in accordance with parliamentary precedent, which decrees that one should never be helpful where one can be obstructive. If the question had been asked anywhere except in the House of Commons, the reply would have been that something of the sort did happen, but that Mr. Wood was a notoriously bad character, that he was offensively drunk at the time, and that the Inspector acted as any other sane man would have done in the circumstances. A sensible and perfectly true answer, but not one that could ever be given at Westminster.

Some people used to wonder at the extraordinary promptness with which the Minister for Technical Administration used to reply even to the most detailed and complicated question. They used to wonder at the alertness of his brain and the accuracy of his memory. For the benefit of these people we now introduce them to the Minister, Colonel Alfred Headenwood, in his office: this office consists of two rooms, an inner room for the Minister himself, and an outer room which is occupied by his secretary and two typists. Between the two rooms, like the great gulf between heaven and earth, a double door is fixed; for the sound of typing must not be allowed to penetrate into the intricate processes of the Minister's brain, which at this particular moment is studying that page of *The Times* which deals with the probable starters at Gatwick. The inner of the doors opens softly, and his secretary, George Feilding, enters. Feilding is a pleasant young man; he is tall, good-looking, and his athletic frame appears to have been built for the wielding of some instrument heavier than a pen. He is aware of that fact; but this secretaryship, unfortunately, was the only job which came his way after the war. As he had been adjutant to Colonel Headenwood during the war, he would not have dreamed of accepting the position if there had been the smallest prospect of any less uncongenial method of earning a living. Nor has he changed his opinion after two years' experience of it. Quite the contrary. But the prospect of another job is still remote, and he knows his place.

'Will you deal with these papers now, sir?' he asks. 'Or shall I come later?'

The Minister ignores his question.

'Oh, Feilding. Good. Come in. I was just going to send for you. I see the Press is taking up this question of the brickmakers

at Petersfield. You'd better collect all the information you can about it, and give me a short *précis* so that I shall be ready with full particulars. There's sure to be a question about it.'

'There is. I've got one here already.'

'Then why didn't you tell me sooner? Mugglerodd again, I suppose.'

Feilding smiled quietly.

'Yes,' he said. 'And rather an inconvenient question.'

'Damn!' said the Minister. 'I knew he was sore about my reply on Tuesday. You know you laid it on a bit too thick, Feilding; I wanted to alter your draft, but I was so pressed for time. . . . Let's see what he's asking now.'

Feilding gave him the printed slip with the question on it.

'Hm, yes, hm—deucid inconvenient. And that's what I said last time, is it? You must be careful, Feilding: you shouldn't have let me make a categorical reply like that—puts us in the deuce of a hole now. Have you drafted a reply to this?'

'Not yet, sir. Question's only just come in.'

'Well, get about it, get about it. Look, it's for Wednesday; that only gives us three days. Damn the man, why can't he keep quiet for a few days? No, don't go away, let's look again. . . . Hm, yes, hm, it's going to be deucid awkward. Look here, Feilding, you had better ring Mugglerodd up and try to get him to withdraw—say it isn't in the interests of His Majesty's Government to have the matter publicly discussed. You know the sort of thing. Yes, do that. . . . No, look here, you had better go round yourself and see him; you know what to say, anything you like as long as you make him withdraw.'

'Very well, sir, I'll do my best.'

Feilding put on his hat and was shortly on his way to beard the Mugglerodd in his den. It was the first time he had been sent on such an errand, yet so scant were his hopes of success that he employed the time while sitting in the front seat on the top of the bus which conveyed him, not in looking at the curious foreshortened figures of the people below, as he would have liked to have done, but in flogging his rather weary brain to find an answer to the Mugglerodd's question. After all, he argued, why should the Mugglerodd withdraw? He had been badly scored off over his last question, and now it was his turn to get his own back. It was perfectly natural. The unfortunate thing from Feilding's point of view was that, while the Minister took all the credit himself when

a success was scored, he always left Feilding with all the blame when the reverse happened. And this was going to be a distinct reverse! However . . .

He found his way to the Mugglerodd's offices, which turned out to be an almost exact replica of the Minister's own. The double doors that concealed the Mugglerodd from a harassing world, they were the same; and the outer office where the work was done, it also was the same or very nearly so. The only difference was that it was less barren than Feilding's own abode: there were neat curtains to hide the window—a thing he had never thought of—and there were roses in a pot on the mantelpiece, and more roses on the table. He did not have to look far to discover the reason for these improvements; for at the table in the secretary's chair sat a young woman, who had no external signs of intellectual qualification except a mass of neat bobbed hair, a dimple, and a most attractive nose.

Fancy the Mugglerodd having a secretary like that! thought Feilding as he said good-morning.

'I'm private secretary to the Minister for Technical Administration,' he went on. 'Would it be possible for me to have an interview with Mr. Mugglerodd this morning?' This, in spite of the dimple, in his best official manner.

'If you would tell me what the question is,' she replied—also officially—'I would inquire if Mr. Mugglerodd is disengaged.'

'I—I would rather speak to him about it direct,' Feilding answered.

'Oh,' she said, 'in other words, you're afraid that if he knows what it is beforehand, he won't see you at all.'

'Marvellous!' Feilding grinned, and had the pleasure of seeing the dimple leap into sudden prominence, and then sink back into its proper place.

'Well, I'm afraid it's no good,' she said: 'he never sees anyone until I've primed him beforehand.'

'Very well then,' Feilding answered. 'It's this. The Minister hopes that he will see his way to withdraw his question on the Petersfield affair, as it is not in the interests of His Majesty's Government to have the matter publicly discussed.'

'I'm afraid your Minister's an optimist,' she replied, getting up. 'However, I'll see.'

He watched her move to the door, open it, and enter the Presence in the same noiseless way as he himself did. Then, as he

waited, he went on wondering—fancy the Mugglerodd having a secretary like that! . . .

She returned in a few minutes, and he knew what the answer would be before she said it.

‘The reply,’ she said, as she closed the door—‘the reply is that Mr. Mugglerodd doesn’t doubt that it is against the interests of His Majesty’s present Government to have the matter discussed, but that nevertheless he considers that discussion will be in the interests of the community: in other words’—and the dimple came into play—‘he’s got a liver, and he won’t withdraw.’

The depression which Feilding felt at this announcement was reflected momentarily on his features, and she added sympathetically:

‘I’m really most awfully sorry. I did try.’

‘Never mind,’ he said—then as a sudden afterthought, ‘I say did he think of that question himself?’

She shook her head.

‘No, I did . . . I always do!’

‘And I do the answers!’

For a moment the two private secretaries looked at each other, while the same thought crossed their minds. It was Feilding who put it into words. He laughed quietly.

‘That really is rather funny,’ he said. ‘Here we’ve been, you and I, for twelve solid months, inventing and evading unnecessary questions, fulminating at each other across the House of Commons through the vocal organs of these two swollen old men, on subjects which they pretend to be of importance to the community, and which neither of us cares a single damn about: here we’ve been, you and I, two underpaid secretaries, for twelve solid months, creating work for each other, and making each other’s lives miserable! I say, do say you think it rather funny! Doesn’t it seem rather a waste of time? Couldn’t you and I have found some better way of employing all those weary hours?’

She turned her head away from him, smiling.

‘If you think you’re going to get out of that question this way,’ she said mildly, ‘you’re mistaken. I had a most unpleasant time with old Mugglerodd over your answer last week, and I’m getting my own back!’

‘Oh,’ Feilding laughed. ‘Very well. Of course now that I know who the enemy is, I’ll be able to arrange the attack accordingly. War to the death!’

He turned to go, then halted at the door.

'I nearly forgot,' he said : 'I've another message to deliver. The Minister's private secretary begs to inquire whether Mr. Mugglerodd's private secretary will do him the honour of dining with him on Wednesday next ?'

He saw no dimple, only the lovely contour of bobbed hair as the answer came :

'I must have notice of that question.'

'At the Pall Mall at eight o'clock ?' he pleaded.

Then she replied smiling :

'The answer is in the affirmative.'

This unpolitical interview might have continued longer had it not been that the door from the Mugglerodd's room opened suddenly. Feilding bolted out into the passage, and when the Mugglerodd entered, he found his private secretary diligently examining papers of public importance.

Feilding's mind during the next few days kept jumping on to Wednesday, now with pleasure, now with foreboding. For Wednesday was to provide him not only with the delight of seeing that adorable head opposite him at dinner, but also with the answering of that inconvenient question which came to that adorable head in one of its less adorable moments.

He was satisfied that the answer he prepared was all that could be done in the circumstances ; nevertheless, as he stood in the lounge of the Pall Mall waiting for his guest, he looked with some anxiety at the evening paper to see how his answer went down in the House. . . . It had not gone down at all. . . . The old fool had muddled it, and then, as he always did when he muddled something, made matters infinitely worse by losing his temper. Feilding remained with his head buried in the paper, frowning.

'You look as though you were sorry you asked me,' said a gentle voice just the other side of the paper.

Feilding at once put it down and apologised.

'I'm awfully sorry,' he said : 'I mean, not—you know—at not being waiting for you in a more correct attitude. But I simply had to look. Let's go and feed. I need sustaining after that.'

The *maitre d'hôtel* led them to a table at the side.

'Where will you sit ?' Feilding asked. 'There! Oh, you want to see the people ; that's all very well, but I want your undivided attention. Oh, very well then. I've ordered dinner so that we don't have to waste any time examining the catalogue—you'll

have to pretend that you like it even if you don't. I'd have ordered a little poison for your coffee, only it's too late—as far as I can see you've already lost me my job !'

'I think you might have made a better show than you did,' she said.

'It's not my fault,' Feilding explained : 'he altered it. He does that sometimes, and it always means disaster. . . . Does old Mugglerodd ever try to do things on his own ?'

'He thinks he does.'

'Ah. . . . What's he like ?'

'Almost unendurable at his best, and quite unendurable when he's not. There was a row to-night when I told him I wasn't going to work late ; he wanted to know where I was going, and so forth.'

'Hope you told him off ?'

'No, I was meek ; not that I am meek really, but I'm saving it all up for one final explosion.'

'Oh, it's like that. . . . And then ?'

'God knows !'

Feilding's eyes contracted in thought. What an infernal shame it was ! She was in the same beastly position as he was himself ; but what was just tolerable for him, seemed to him to be absolutely unthinkable for her.

'It is a shame !' he said.

'What about yourself ?'

'Me . . . Oh, that's different. I'm a man.'

'Oh, fortunate creature,' she laughed. 'I must say the one advantage of working for a man is that it makes one quite contented to be a woman !'

'But surely you don't think we're all like the Mugglerodd ?' asked Feilding, startled at her bitterness. 'I can't allow you to have these awful ideas. Now just to take one instance : I myself am a perfectly charming man—quite different'—he watched the dimple appear, and continued—'and to think of your being hidden away as private secretary to old Mugwump—it's wicked, monstrous ! You ought to be put somewhere where people can see you, and made to do eight hours' smiling a day. By Jove, yes, that's an idea for brighter London—your smile !'

'You are an idiot,' she said gently.

'Yes'—a sudden thought struck him—'by Jove, I am ! Do you realise that I don't yet know your name ? Mine's George Feilding.'

'And mine's Coussens—Miss Coussens.'

'Miss Coussens indeed,' he echoed: 'that's not your name, it's part of your address. Now do tell me your real name—please.'

'Well, as a matter of fact it's Edwyna!'

'Heavens above! Who gave you such a name?'

'My godfathers and godmothers in my——'

'Silly!' he leaned forward so that his hand touched hers on the tablecloth. 'Well, I'm very sorry, but Edwyna will never do. I'm going to call you "Snip."'

And he called her Snip, and the rest of their conversation is of no immediate importance.

It was not till long after their coffee was finished that they rose to leave. Then, as he followed her out of the room, he felt a tug at his sleeve, and heard a 'Feilding, how are you?' from the table he was passing. It was Stewart Gillies, a genial round man in the prime of life—that is to say, past fifty. Feilding had a great admiration for Gillies, not because he was a rich stockbroker, but because he had stolidly gone through the worst part of the war as a Second Lieutenant in Feilding's Company. Old Gillies, they used to call him in spite of his prime of life: the cheeriest soul on the Western Front, and quite the most incompetent officer.

'Good Lord! Gillies, how goes it?' Feilding clasped his hand.

'Not too bad. What are you doing now?'

'Oh, I'm private secretary to the great Headenwood. I say, I really must be off.'

'Yes, I know, I saw! But she won't run away. Oh, very well then; but come and see me some time. . . . Good! bye-bye.'

Curious meeting old Gillies again, thought Feilding, and thought no more about it. He extracted a promise from Snip to dine with him again in a week's time, and went contented home to bed. But the next day was not so good. The Minister was in a most abominable mood, offensively rude and overbearing, and he was rash enough to tell Feilding that he had better go if he couldn't do his job better. It was a rash thing to say, for the last thing he wanted was to lose his private secretary: and that is precisely what did happen. Feilding told him roundly to go to the devil, and walked straight out of the office. He, too, had lost his temper, and it was not till his temper cooled down that he realised that if he didn't find another job pretty soon, it was doubtful whether he could even pay for the dinner which Snip was going to have with him on Wednesday. The Minister was left in a state bordering on

hysteria ; and when he found another question had come in from the Mugglerodd on the same infernal subject, he raved round the room, and was not pacified until his medical attendant arrived and diagnosed influenza.

The next few days were anxious ones for Feilding. Nevertheless he looked anything but depressed when on Wednesday evening he again stood in the Pall Mall lounge waiting for Snip. In she came, as punctual as the sun, looking as sweet as ever, with the dimple in evidence, and a smug pleased look on her countenance.

Feilding wondered what guilty secret it was that gave her this expression of inward delight.

It was over the *hors-d'œuvre* that he asked.

'D'you know that you look positively wicked?' he said. 'Been concocting another question, I suppose?'

'It's something like that,' she admitted.

'Well,' continued Feilding with mock seriousness, 'you might have saved yourself the trouble. The last one was sufficient. I did get the sack!'

'Oh!' Snip's eyes opened wide.

'Yes, it is "Oh," and entirely your doing. I think the least you can do now, having lost me my job, is to find me another!' He leaned forward earnestly. 'Do you think you could do that—I know you know of one which was absolutely made for me.'

Snip wondered. Then one glance at him was sufficient to show that she had not misunderstood.

'Are you sober, honest, industrious?' she asked, crumbling her bread with her fingers.

'I think so,' he said.

'Any other qualifications?'

'Only,' he hesitated, 'only—love.'

He said the word so softly that she could hardly hear. She glanced up smiling, their eyes met, and no further words were required to register the agreement.

The rest of that meal was sheer bliss.

Again, as they came out of the restaurant, Feilding felt his sleeve tugged, and again it was Gillies. Feilding bent down as Gillies whispered, 'By the way, that job is worth an extra hundred a year to a married man,' then he went on his way smiling.

It was a taxi that conveyed Feilding and Snip home from the restaurant, and though neither of them lived more than a hundred yards from Westminster, yet their way home involved a drive

which included three circuits of Regent's Park as well as other peregrinations.

Snip was more smug and pleased-looking than ever.

Eventually she explained.

'I've finished with that horrid old man,' she said: 'he was beastly to-day, and I've left for good.'

'Splendid,' said Feilding softly in her ear.

'I didn't tell him,' she went on with a snigger of long-suppressed mirth. 'I only decided at the last moment. He kept worrying me for that question he is to ask in the House to-night; he worried and worried and worried till in the end I gave him the usual typed slip—only it wasn't the question at all, it was something else. I wonder if he's looked at it yet! Oh, I did enjoy it, darling, and I do love you!'

The Mugglerodd unfortunately had not looked at it. At that very moment when the two secretaries were sitting very close in the taxi which kept doing circles round Regent's Park, the Mugglerodd was rising to his feet in the hushed solemnity of a crowded House to ask his question. He cleared his throat, cast one malign glance at his influenza-stricken adversary, drew himself up to his full height, opened his mouth—then suddenly his knees gave way, and he sat down with a thud on the bench. The paper from which he was about to read his question contained nothing but the words:

'Wanted—a new secretary for a pompous old fool.'

THE TWO SIEGES OF BHURTPUR (1805 AND 1826)

BY MAJOR-GEN. SIR GEORGE MACMUNN, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O.

A HUNDRED years is a long time to remember. Since Lord Wellington with scant patience sat him down to besiege those fortresses in Spain that barred his progress, the British Army has not been largely concerned with sieges. Defences of a kind have been numerous, but the sieges have been but four, and the first of the four took place a hundred years ago this year. The other three were within the nine years from 1848 to 1857, commencing with the curious outbreak of a disgruntled governor against his own Indian masters, which ended in the siege of Mooltan, a story of tragedy and romance, then in 1854 the weary long-drawn siege of Sebastopol, and last the ever-famous story of the Ridge at Delhi.

There is a medal inscribed 'To the Army of India,' so old that the youngest recipient has long gone to his rest, given for the campaigns of Lake and Arthur Wellesley, of Lord Moira and Malcolm and Hislop, which bears last among its twenty-four clasps that for 'Bhurtpur'—and yet what of it? Who knows (or cares) of Bhurtpur and what befell there, of the dogged failure of Lord Lake, at the end of a career of daring triumphs, of the three thousand soldiers who fell before its walls to no avail, of all India watching the British for twenty years and more in jeering wonder, and then the writing on the wall, and the capture after a prolonged siege and storm in 1826! The British corps that took part may treasure the memory—the native regiments that did so well, vanished in the debacle of 1857, and no one else remains to care, though as many troops took part in the final capture as landed in the Crimea.

Bhurtpur was a large and, in those days, strongly fortified city a few marches from Agra, the centre of the incomprehensible and warlike race of Jāts, to which some say the Gypsies of England belong. It was besieged and four times unsuccessfully assaulted by Lord Lake in 1805, from which date, till Lord Combermere stormed the fortress in 1826, its rulers had scoffed at British supremacy, and harboured every wolf's-head and every masterless man in the countryside.

Now the sieges of Bhurtpur came about in this wise. At the

commencement of the last century the position of the British in India was a very different thing from what it is now. The Mahratta Confederacy, Scindiah and Holkar, the Peishwa and the Bhonsla, was a power in the land almost as great as our own, and bitterly hostile with prophetic wisdom. We had been at war with France for years, and the Peace of Amiens was looked on as a temporary respite at best. We had, it is true, after years of strife, hurled the French as a power from India, but their roots dug deep, and French officers and many adventurers of the lesser European breeds were hard at work organising on their own models the troops of the Mahratta chiefs and their lesser satellites. Napoleon Buonaparte openly and in all seriousness was planning an invasion of India via Syria, with the willing help of the Tzar, and with him was closeted daily one De Boigne, the famous Savoyard general who had just quitted the service of Scindiah, for whom he had raised and trained fifty thousand men, horse, foot and artillery, over whom M. Perron now reigned in his stead. The whole of the Doab, the territory between the Jumna and the Ganges, had been assigned to Perron by Scindiah for the upkeep of this huge French trained force, and the wretched Shah Alum, the puppet of Delhi and titular Great Mogul and Emperor of India, was in Perron's hands. The Mahratta Confederacy was eagerly planning to try conclusions with the *Angrez* and drive them into the sea, and all India stood agog to see it.

Luckily for England, there were some in those days who understood that the moment to make war is that most suited to oneself, and not that most favourable for one's adversary. At that time Richard Colley Wellesley, Lord Mornington, and later the Marquis Wellesley, was Governor-General and a very strong man, while his two brothers were his right-hand men. It had soon been borne in on him that the Mahrattas and the British could not both own sway in the land. Two wives in one house and two masterful races in one countryside have always failed, since the earliest days of man. So, before the Mahratta plans were ready or the promised French assistance arrived from oversea, the Governor-General had decided to deal the Mahrattas a staggering blow, to secure the person of the Great Mogul and crush the French influence once and for all, and to make all the lesser states accept his subsidiary system of alliances.

In 1803 General Arthur Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson swung up over the Ghauts to cut the Mahrattas from the sea, and fall on

Scindiah and the Bhonsla, and General Gerald Lake marched out of Cawnpore with close on eleven thousand men, to capture Agra and all the 'French State,' as M. Perron's military province in the Doab was called. A smaller force moved into Bundelcund from Allahabad. Of Wellesley's crowning victories of Assaye and Argaum, hardest of hard-fought battles, of Lake's daring march on Delhi against M. Louis Bourquin, of his interview with the blind and tearful emperor, it is not possible to speak at length here, nor of the final destruction of the last of De Boigne's fine army at Laswaree. They are a splendid record of daring and energy, of *l'audace et toujours l'audace*, of which Lake was the great exponent. Following on these victories and the fall of fortress Gwalior, came the excesses of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, the Chief of Indore, and Colonel Monson's ill-conceived advance across the Chumbal and all the pity and humiliation of his retreat before Holkar, with losses of guns and almost all his force, which in the fickle East largely undid all the good of Lake's previous victories.

Lake, however, soon came to the rescue and Holkar disappeared before him, to reappear suddenly at Delhi, held tenaciously by a small sepoy garrison under Burn and David Ochterlony, against furious onslaughts, till Lake arrived in hot haste again. Then commenced Lake's famous cavalry pursuit of Holkar, who had now been reinforced by Scindiah and Bhurtpur, as far as the banks of the Betwa, and whom he finally overtook and trounced at Furruckabad. This march, as great an achievement of cavalry as any in history, totalled 350 miles between October 31 and November 17, 1804, and the last stage was seventy miles in twenty-four hours.

The year before, the Rajah of Bhurtpur had made a treaty of alliance with the British, but after Monson's debacle he thought, like many others, that he knew which way the cat was going to jump, and had joined the elated Holkar. While General Lake and his dragoons, His Majesty's 8th, 27th and 29th and several native cavalry corps, had been chasing Holkar's hordes of horse, General Fraser had destroyed his infantry under the walls of the Jât fortress of Deig.

A few days latter Lake himself appeared before the fortress with a light siege train drawn hastily from Agra, and, opening fire on November 14, stormed the place with his usual élan on the 22nd.

From thence he moved to settle accounts with the faithless Bhurtpur. The 'Army of India' medal has clasps both for the 'Battle of Deig' and the 'Capture of Deig.'

After the continuous marching and countermarching of the last twelve months, Lake was anxious to give his troops some rest, and turned on Bhurtpur in the hope that his luck would hold good and that its capture would finish the campaign. The past year had been full of incident, stirring and dramatic in the extreme, notably the rescue of the blind Shah Alum from the hands of the French Mahratta fraternity. We in these days do not realise how hard the French influence died in Hindustan. In the state of Hyderabad the adventurer soldier thrives in a mean fashion to this day, and the descendants of the French soldiers of fortune are still to be found there, while in the Punjab their tracks are still recent. In the Imperial Service Forces of Kashmir there were till recently Dogra officers who would drill a battalion in French, close on 150 years after the downfall of the French power in India.

Among the many incidents of Lake's campaign an amusing one comes down to us, and that is, how when the General was holding high Durbar in the Imperial city the day after his entry, the famous Begum Samru or Sombre of Sardhana came with her motley escort to pay her respects to success, and to the countrymen of her lover, George Thomas, her brute husband the drunken French sailor Sombre having been dead some years. General Lake had lunched and lunched well, after the fashion of the day, and, as the Begum entered the Durbar tent, he sprang down from his dais and kissed her soundly on both cheeks, whereat an uproar arose and some of her followers drew their swords. The Begum, however, airily remarked that he was her cousin and that such was the English custom, by which time the General had handed her to a seat beside him.

Returning to the General on his way to Bhurtpur, it is interesting to try to picture an Indian army on the march a century ago. At the head marched the cavalry, three regiments of jolly English dragoons, in the leather crested helmet, a protection equally against sword and sun, and as many more of irregular horse, for the native dragoon in a travesty of Georgian uniform had not then been evolved. Wide on the flanks marched the newly raised horse artillery, the outcome of the earlier galloper guns, the gunners in the same dragoon helmets—which this arm continued to wear in India till the days of the Mutiny—the light pieces leaping and bounding to every tussock of coarse kai grass.

At the head of the infantry columns ride the General and his staff, a pad elephant for the convenience of reconnaissance lurching

behind. General Lake, wearing an immense cheese-cutter cocked hat, the right brim turned down against the morning sun, exactly as we wore our slouch hats in Africa, his grey hair *en queue* in the now failing fashion, rides a grey Arab and is cursing the carelessness of some of his rascally dragoons who have allowed some Pindaris to get at part of his baggage train. He is furious, and complains of being at the mercy of a damned incompetent staff and a pack of drowsy troopers, 'as I was at Castlebar, by gad!'—though as a matter of fact both staff and troopers had served him right well, as he fully recognised. Ever since he had been badly surprised by the French in Ireland, however, anything of the nature of an inroad upset his good-humour.

Behind the General came the main infantry headed by the famous 76th Foot (now suitably enough the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Wellington's Own West Riding Regiment) in short scarlet jackets and high felt hats like an old gentleman's bowler, white breeches and high gambadoes, or as much of them as a year's wear and tear had left; also H.M. 75th and the 1st Bengal Fusiliers. With them marched four staunch and veteran battalions of Bengal Native Infantry, at a time when the old Bengal Army was at its zenith, and had not fallen into the hands of faddists to its bitter undoing, viz., the 2nd, 9th, 15th and 22nd Native Infantry.

The 76th had been through the campaign since the beginning, had stormed the astounding fortress of Aligarh and borne the brunt of the onslaught of the Mahrattas at Delhi, and led the attack at Laswaree, at a time when they were the only European infantry with the force. They were indispensable to General Lake, and, like Prince Kraft and his corps artillery, in the morning he would call for his boots and his 76th Foot, and then attack. In the capture of Deig the week before, it was the 76th that had the place of honour and the most losses. Their casualties had been very severe in the campaign, and the whole battalion had practically been replaced once.

The four sepoy battalions wore scarlet cut-away jackets and white shorts that left their legs free and bare. Their headgear was a low black shako, and had not yet developed into the monstrosity of later days, and their arm was the old flint fusil with the long bayonet. With the infantry lumbered the foot artillery, nines and twelves, and then the long yokes of bullocks drawing the eighteen-pounder trains with tumbrils and mortar beds and all the impedimenta of a siege train. The long baggage trains of an army are much the same all the world over, and in one century as in another. The general

appearance would be much the same as in India to-day, save that elephants are fewer and baggage far less.¹

On January 2, 1805, the army swung into position before Bhurtpur, in which Ranjeet Singh, the Jāt Rajah, with a large force of Jāts and Mahrattas, had ensconced himself. Outside bodies of Holkar's cavalry hung about, having recovered from their previous beating, and with them was Jeswunt Rao himself, and Amir Khan the Pindari leader as well, with a large following of horse. The outer wall of Bhurtpur, some four miles in circumference, had an appearance of immense strength, consisting of huge bastions and curtains of solid masonry, covered with a thick layer of mud bricks. The bastions were extremely lofty, and guns innumerable bristled from the tops, while round the whole ran a wide ditch crossed by narrow causeways, and into which water could be admitted by a canal connected with a jheel hard by.

The General's first idea was to put his 76th at it and take the place by storm, and it is probable that the élan and determination of his troops, added to the prestige they had acquired, would have induced success. There is little doubt that Delhi would have fallen to an assault following on the battle of Badli ka Serai² and the first return of the masters to the ridge, or even that Sebastopol would have yielded to a prompt advance of the Allies. The solemn preparations for a siege mean that every weak point is thoroughly defended and the assault indefinitely delayed.

General Lake allowed himself to be persuaded, and sat down to a siege with a very inadequate siege train. His shot and shell penetrated the thick mud coating of the walls without doing any damage. On January 7, some infantry stationed outside the walls were dislodged and batteries at once established. By the 9th a rough scramble alley had been battered on the face of one bastion, and the impatient General ordered an assault for that night at 8 P.M. Three columns formed for the storming and filed out of the camp in the still of the evening. The centre column, consisting of the flank companies of the four European battalions and a native battalion, led the attack under Colonel Maitland.

¹ It has been sung—

' In the days of Seringapatam
We lived on chappatties and jam,
And marched hundreds of miles
Behind *kathis* and *byles*
In the days of Seringapatam.'

² Though it could probably not have been held.

The leading men of the 22nd swam the ditch and scrambled up the wall, but in the dark they were not followed immediately, and the surprised garrison hurrying to the ramparts had time to get into their breastworks and open a heavy fire on the stormers. The flank columns, delayed by unexpected obstacles, came up to the support late, and the men of the 22nd were forced back with heavy loss. Colonel Maitland himself was killed in leading the centre column to a second attempt, and, nearly every officer being down, the force made their way back to the trenches baffled more than beaten. Five officers and eighty-five men were killed, and twenty-four officers and 371 men wounded; but General Lake, cheery and resolute, issued a hearty order and decided to have at them again, but by daylight this time. At 3 P.M. on the afternoon of the 21st, a storming party consisting of detachments of the 22nd, 75th, and 76th, equipped with ladders and portable bridges, headed once more for the ill-omened breach. Behind followed the remainder of these corps and the 9th, 15th, and 22nd Native Infantry, the whole under Colonel McRae. The defenders had not been idle since their victory, and a number of guns from the parapets had been collected round the breach. *Jingal* and *zumboorak*, fieldpiece and *sher butcha* and every devil-mouthed contrivance that could belch old nails and grape, opened on the stormers as they breasted the breach. As success seemed impossible under the circumstances and men were falling in scores, Colonel McRae drew off his force with a loss of eighteen officers and 573 men.

The General, nothing daunted, thanked his men for their efforts, and cheered their spirits by falling on Amir Khan, the Pindari leader, who had ventured to tamper with convoys meant for better men than he. After this diversion, the besiegers took matters more quietly, pounding solidly away at walls that crumbled but slowly, till, on February 10, more fresh blood was added in the shape of reinforcements from Bombay under Major-General Jones. By this time the besiegers had prepared large quantities of rafts, ladders and fascines, while regular approaches had been made and the siege batteries pushed close to the walls. A mine had been laid to blow up the counterscarp, and at 4 P.M. on the afternoon of February 20 the third assault took place.

The command was entrusted to Lieutenant-Colonel Don, who had greatly distinguished himself in Monson's disastrous retreat. The Bombay troops formed the bulk of the two flank columns, and the centre was furnished by the original troops of the force,

the 76th of course leading. The enemy had made two desperate sallies during that morning and the night before, but had been repulsed, not without severe loss to the besiegers, and the dead lay still about when the assault started. Something went wrong, what exactly is hard to say : the troops in the centre column were probably stale—they had fair reason to be. Fearing a mine, they hesitated at the foot of the breach. In vain Colonel Don urged and incited them : the men, the famous and invincible 76th, would not look at the breach. In vain a forlorn hope of the 22nd sacrificed itself, in vain a few sepoy attempted the breach. The men were stale, badly stale, and hung about at the foot of the rubble only to lose heavily. The 32nd Native Infantry with two guns tried the breach once more, while a column of the 86th, entering one tower, captured eleven guns and actually removed them, but were unsupported. The defenders sprung a mine, and this added to the confusion, so that the attempt was abandoned, though fourteen officers ran to the front and tried to persuade the men to take advantage of the enemy's confusion. The loss was twenty-eight officers and 894 men, to the chagrin of the General. Nothing daunted, however, he decided to renew his attack next day, since the failure of the last seemed due to exceptional reasons. He addressed the troops on parade, regretting the misconduct of the Europeans, referring to it more in sorrow than in anger, and called for volunteers for a storming party. Lieutenant Templeton of the 76th offered to lead the forlorn hope. At three o'clock of the next afternoon the fourth assault, commanded by the gallant if unthinking Brigadier Monson, filed out to the foot of the breaches, with a fine enthusiasm that spoke volumes for the discipline of the period. The troops were furnished by the 1st Europeans, the 65th and 85th Foot, and three battalions of Bengal Native Infantry, with every siege gun that could be brought to bear joining in, till very hell seemed loose.

In vain again, however, forlorn hopes struggled up the glacis, in vain sepoy and soldier vied with each other for the place of honour, while staff officers shouted and regimental officers died in trying to lead the rank and file to impossible feats. Down the rubble slopes of the steep breaches, over the masses of corruption that were once smartly accoutred British soldiers and the debris of shot and shell in the ruins, half a score of cannon belched grape and canister and scrap iron, till close on a thousand of the stormers lay piled high, a horror and an offence in the sinking sun.

Dogged had failed to do it for once in Lord Lake's career, and the brigadier sullenly withdrew his broken columns. Thirty-four officers and 987 rank and file was the butcher's tally that night.

The four assaults had cost the British 103 officers and 3100 men, while the siege guns were worn out and the ammunition expended. The siege was therefore changed to a blockade, since loose his grip the General would not, and again he soothed his temper by falling on Amir Khan and Holkar, who had dared harass his rear once more. On this Ranjeet Singh of Bhurtpur, weary of a defence which held little promise, expressed his readiness to treat, and finally agreed to render up the territories we had given him out of those taken from Scindiah, and to pay twenty lakhs of rupees towards the cost of the war. Defeat could have hardly cost him more dear.

Lord Lake—for he had been raised to the peerage—'of Delhi and Laswarre'—a fact on which the Bhurtpur Rajah had sent out to congratulate him in the middle of the siege—now turned once more on the irreconcilable Holkar and chased him north till he fled for safety to the Punjab, when, the great Marquis Wellesley having been recalled, a peace-at-any-price Viceroy, Sir George Barlow, ordered Lake to return, and restored his lost dominions to Jeswunt Rao.

So, though the Rajah of Bhurtpur had been content enough to purchase peace, yet throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan went the story of the invincible British, the cursed *Angrez*, four times hurled back from those grey mud towers; so that men said what one has done another may do, and every native prince in the land let hope rise in his breast. Bhurtpur blustered and swaggered, and built an immense new tower to his walls with the skulls of the British dead, but did not mention the twenty lakhs he had paid to loose the grip outside.

After that, whenever the hand of the English fell heavy on the East, men would say, 'Yah! bully us, but go and take Bhurtpur!'; and into that walled city gradually went for sanctuary half the ill-gotten treasure in Upper India. Thus closed the episode of the First Siege of Bhurtpur.

THE SECOND SIEGE OF BHURTPUR.

For twenty years the '*Fateh Burj*,' the Tower of Victory, with its plinth of skulls, stood as a mark of promise to Hindustan. War succeeded war, potentates fought against the Pax Britannica from the south and west of India to Burma and the Himalayas, and all

the time the taunt was in men's mouths, 'Go take Bhurtpur!' After the fiascos and overwhelming losses from folly and disease which marked the first year of the now forgotten Ava campaign, the first of the three Burma wars, the prestige of the 'Huzoors' did not stand high in the land, and the Pindari barons and Mahratta chiefs finally conquered in 1817-19, all looked for a sign.

In 1823 died Ranjeet Singh of Bhurtpur, and a brother succeeded to the throne, to be shortly after poisoned by a nephew who seized the *gaddi* and imprisoned the rightful heir, a lad some five years of age. The successor to Ranjeet Singh had been recognised by us, and, in the interest of his son, Doorjan Sal, the wicked nephew, was declared a usurper. Sir David Ochterlony, he who twenty years earlier had helped defend Delhi against Holkar's hordes, denounced Doorjan Sal on behalf of the Governor-General and ordered a force to assemble and move at once to Bhurtpur, since he knew, and none better, the ferment of which the walled city was the centre. On this the Governor-General, Lord Amherst, with an army and a treasury heavily taxed to maintain the Burma war, ignoring the danger, counter-ordered the move and refused to ratify Sir David Ochterlony's promises of early reinstatement of the rightful heir to the throne. Sir David Ochterlony died shortly after, broken in heart at the rebuff and his supersession.

Relieved of the approach of the terrible 'Lony Ochter,' Doorjan Sal collected arms, powder, and artillery, and sent messengers to all the princes and states of Central India asking for support, and it was not till he had made his position extremely strong that the Government recognised that the action of Doorjan Sal was a test case and all India the court. In December 1825 a force of some 27,000 men with a big siege train moved on Bhurtpur under Lord Combermere, the Commander-in-Chief.¹ By December 11 the city was invested with a cordon fifteen and a half miles long. The same tall walls of solid mud which had baffled Lord Lake still surrounded the city, and the Motee Jheel still supplied water to the moat. Guns innumerable crowned the walls, and 25,000 Jāts, Pathans, and Rajputs defended the city and its immense store of treasure. Lord Combermere's left wing surprised the Jāts in the act of cutting the dam that opened the moat to the waters of the jheel, and thus prevented the ditch from becoming an obstacle.

¹ Among the troops forming Lord Combermere's force were the 11th Light Dragoons, 1st and 8th Bengal Cavalry, 14th and 59th Foot, 1st Bengal Fusiliers, and the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 66th Native Infantry, with the Sirmoor Nasceree Rifle Battalions, as well as a large force of Bengal Artillery both British and Native.

There is a story of the old Duke and the Court of Directors, who had applied to him for advice in their selection of a Commander-in-Chief. He recommended Combermere, to which they demurred, saying that they understood that Lord Combermere was not a man of great brain. 'Damn his brains!' said the Duke. 'I tell you Combermere is the man to take Bhurtpur.'

The Commander-in-Chief spent nine days in survey and reconnaissance, and finally decided to attack from the east, but made a feint of coming from the south-west as did Lord Lake. Under cover of this feint the cordon was drawn far closer, and two important positions on the east were taken up, a desperate sortie being repulsed on the 23rd, made with the object of attacking the first parallel, which was within 600 yards of the walls. Owing to the nearness of this parallel the Jât guns could not be depressed sufficiently to reach the British batteries. On the 24th all women other than those of the Royal family were permitted to pass out, and on the 25th a large force of the defenders' cavalry succeeded in cutting their way out. By the 26th the Jât guns were silenced and the second parallel was dug some 250 yards only from the city, and by the 28th the approaches were within twenty yards of the walls. But in this 'strange and gigantic concrete of earth' breaches, as Lord Lake had found, were no good. On the left a battery of fourteen heavy guns had battered one curtain for a week without making any real impression. Every heavy gun in Upper India had been brought to the siege, and there was not an eighteen-pounder to be found elsewhere at any place north of Allahabad; so on January 6 it was decided to mine under the ditch to the big bastions. On the 7th a shell from the city blew up one of our ammunition tumbrils, and this exploded an adjacent magazine of 20,000 lbs. of powder, a heavy loss. The bombardment continued to distract attention from the mining. On the 13th, 1,808 shot and shell were fired into the city, and on the 15th, 1,416, rising to 1,894 on the 16th. The garrison continually sortied at night with great resolution. Our own mines more than once met the enemy countermining, and on the 8th some were exploded to give entrance to the counter-scarp, where sixteen Gurkhas surprised some sixty of the enemy and destroyed them. It had been rumoured that the big breach, by which a scramble-way led to the top, had been repaired, and on the 20th five Gurkhas and half a dozen British volunteered to reconnoitre. They gained the top unmolested, fired a volley on the defenders and hurled stones, creating a great panic, escaping

with only the loss of one of their number. Feeling was running high among the besiegers, for some prisoners captured by the Jāts had been mutilated and put to death. A curious incident was the desertion to the enemy of a Corporal Herbert of the Bengal Horse Artillery who had been reduced.¹ He took an active part in working the enemy's guns, directing them with success on Lord Combermere's camp, and was finally hanged by us for his pains, on the capture of the city.

It was decided to make the attack on the 'Long-necked' bastion and the north-east angle, and two mines under the former were exploded on the 16th, bringing down the clay case with brick core and all the guns on top. The mine under the north-east bastion was complete on the 17th, filled with 10,000 lb. of powder, and fitted with a train 300 yards long.

It was arranged to spring the mine and then assault in two main columns, one under General Nicholls against the 'Long-necked' bastion and the other under General Reynell against the north-east bastion. A third column under Colonel Delamain was to attack a breach made by battering close to the Jageenah Gate. A subsidiary column from General Nicholls' force was to assault a battered breach on the left of the 'Long-necked' bastion, and another force under Colonel Wilson was to turn to the right at the ditch and attack an outwork.

Before dawn on the 18th all the stormers had occupied the trenches and only awaited the explosions. The defenders, with an intuition of what was going forward, opened a heavy fire at daybreak till at 8 A.M. it was announced that all was ready. The mine by the breach near the Jageenah Gate was sprung first, and then that in the counterscarp, west of the north-east angle.

These explosions brought the garrison crowding to the walls, 800 Pathan warriors rushing to the parapets of the huge north-east bastion, which it was their duty to hold. Immediately the mine under this latter with its 10,000 lb. of powder was fired. The ground heaved and rocked, and with a dull heavy roar half the bastion lurched and rose sullenly in the air, followed by clouds of thick pungent smoke, carrying high into the air guns and gabions, Pathans, banners, swords and matchlocks, to be strewn in their descent in one horrid confusion of mangled flesh and broken metal.

¹ Two other English and two Irish gunners went with him. Herbert had served at Waterloo. It would be interesting to know the grievance that worked on his mind.

Three hundred of the Pathans had been blown to pieces. As the smoke cleared, Reynell's leading brigade—which had also suffered somewhat from the explosion—consisting of a wing of H.M.'s 14th, the 58th Bengal Native Infantry and 100 Gurkhas of the Naseeree Battalion, dashed at the reeking breach, while half a minute later Nicholls' column, with loud cheers, went at the 'Long-necked' bastion. The defence of the Pathan bastion by the survivors of the explosion was desperate in the extreme, and both Reynell's brigadiers, McCombe and Patton, were struck down in the breach; while only seventy-five of the defenders escaped with their lives.

On reaching the summit of the Pathan (north-east) bastion, the first brigade, now led by Major Everard, turned to the right, and the second under Major Bishop swung to the left. These latter soon joined Nicholls' right, which had diverged after the 'Long-necked' bastion had been carried. Brigadier Edwards, who led this assault, had been killed and his brigade much knocked about, so that it was not till Fagan's second brigade came up that this force penetrated beyond the summit of the bastion they had won. Nicholls' reserve brigade under Brigadier Adams succeeded in entering the city by the Muttra Gate and in clearing the streets.

Away on the British left Colonel Delamain's column, whose breach by the Jageenah Gate had been the first to be exploded, scaled the parapet and succeeded in forcing the defenders towards the gate, where there was a deep alley-way some sixty feet below the rampart level, with only one flight of narrow steps leading down. As Delamain forced the Jâts back on this chasm, Everard's column came up from the east, and thus a number of them were penned in, with only the deep hollow street below them. Refusing surrender, they fought on with desperation, till hurled pell-mell into the abyss. Some hundreds lay there dead or dying, their padded cotton coats, catching fire, adding to the horror, while their exploding bandoliers made any attempts at rescue a perilous one.

By this time Lord Combermere had come to the Jageenah Gate and received the news that a short time previously Major Hunter of the 41st Native Infantry had pursued a party of the garrison into the palace and inner fort, and that Khoosial Singh, brother-in-law of Doorjan Sal, with 100 followers had been shut out of the palace and, refusing to surrender, had been killed. Guns were sent to blow in the gates, and it was finally found that Doorjan Sal and his immediate following had escaped by the Combheer Gate, cutting down a picquet of H.M.'s 14th who had opposed them.

Outside, the cavalry under Brigadier Sleigh had captured 6000 fugitives, and at half-past two in the afternoon, seeing no sign of more, the Brigadier had dismissed his brigade. Hardly had this been done when the riding master of the 8th Cavalry reported horsemen in the jungle, and Lieutenant Barbor with his troop, being ordered after them, saddled up in time to capture Doorjan Sal himself with his wife and child, the former surrendering with Barbor's pistol at his head.

In the meantime the whole city was in our hands, with the 37th Native Infantry in the inner fort, their King's Colour floating from over the gateway to the cheers of the soldiery. Next morning the Commander-in-Chief and his staff breakfasted in the palace, and the rightful heir, the son of the murdered Baldeo Singh, was reinstated, but in future as a vassal and dependant of the British. The army then marched off for the frontier of Alwar, taking with them the usurper Doorjan Sal, who was maintained as a *détenu* at Benares.

Thus ended the siege of Bhurtpur, and thenceforward no state remained south of the Sutlej to dispute the sovereignty of the Huzoors.

Of the 25,000 or so said to have been the garrison of the city, it is believed that 13,000 were killed or wounded, and that 4000 perished in the grand assault, so that men said that no wise men would ever again quarrel with the Sirkar. One hundred and thirty-five pieces of ordnance were captured, and immense treasure, of which the troops were granted a large portion of prize-money (some £480,000). The total British loss was under 1100—a very different tally from that of the first siege. Two years later Lord Combermere went there on a visit and was well received. In the strain of the Mutiny thirty years later, the Jāt contingent, naturally enough, went with the majority.

IN THE FOREST

BY A. M. PANTIN.

AND here in the heart of the wild wood was a gate. No path led up to it or away from it, no house stood near. It hung alone between two tall ash-trees, its hinges in the fluted grey bark of one, its lock in the other, and all about it and above was the delicate formal pattern of the ash-leaves. The gate itself was of old exquisite iron, in a tall and simple arch that was a very symbol of romance, and in the half-moon hoop at the top a dim-paned lantern swung. There was no light in it—indeed, there was no need, for the light of day, strained through unnumbered leaves, filled the wood with a grave clearness that had no brightness in its being at all.

I gazed at this gate in perplexity, but with delight. The grass around its foot was wet and deep, and blade met blade tenderly through its bars. Had it ever been opened? And why—why was it there? Beyond its slender arch were seen the selfsame crystal air and solemn boughs. I made a circle around trees and gate, and still I saw no answer to their riddle. There seemed not to be a trace of a road or path of any sort. There the gate hung, between heaven and earth and two ash-trees, alone.

Coming round to the front again, I bethought me of trying the lock. It was a surprise to find it fastened, though how I could not at once discover. A lock there was, but not such as I was familiar with: in fact, there was no visible keyhole at all. I pressed the lock this way and that without result, for I did not wish to exert force; indeed, I did not feel, somehow, that force would avail here, and could as little have wrenched and hurt the lovely gate as I could have broken the back of the sapling which sprang near-by. I did move the bars gently with my hands, whereupon there chimed forth a note faint and broken, but still so beautiful and startling that I stood motionless for many minutes.

'I must get through,' I thought. 'How is it to be done?' So I drew a little away and stood looking up at the lightless lantern. As I gazed, a branch dipped down and up and dangled before my eyes a bunch of green ash-fruits. 'Ash-keys,' I said, and with a sudden trembling heart I reached up and gathered the thick cluster. I chose the longest key, advanced it to the lock, and touched it.

'Please let me in,' I whispered, and with a soft sound the lock

moved beneath my hand, the hinge turned, and the gate swung open. I stepped through and the gate shut behind me.

I saw the same great trees, the brilliant turf, I heard the same brook, fresh and full. But with what a difference. It seemed as though I had never before known the meaning of sight and hearing, so amazingly, unbelievably transparent was the air about me, so pure the notes of the breaking stream. Minutes swept by while I stood lost in the delight of the revelation. Then I awoke and took my first step over the grass.

Just as I did so there came a movement among the bushes on the other side of the stream. I stopped. Out through the low boles came a maiden in a green garment. The bank was thick with the airy stems and floating flowers of white wild parsley as high as her shoulders, but she parted them with her bright arms in a swimming gesture and came out upon the stream's brink. Her dark hair was loose behind her: she gathered it in her hand, twisted it to the top of her head, and fastened it there somehow. Then she dropped her green gown and stepped down into the water.

The brook was not so deep as to reach her white knees. Down she kneeled, and taking up cupfuls of water in her hands she splashed herself with rainbows, while countless ghostly suns and moons, following their pallid images in the stream, flitted and played upon her. All at once the pin gave way, her hair tumbled like another brook about her, and she uttered a short cry that was the key-note to all the music of the waters. It was so lovely a sound that an answering cry of joy sprang from my lips. She turned and saw me.

'Alas!' I thought. 'It is over.' But no. For though at the first sound she had started out of the water in a shower of drops and had caught up her green frock from the grass, she did not run. She faced me with wide, watchful eyes, pressing her shoulder back against the leaves as though ready for instant flight, but still not flying. I could see the frightened heart beating in her side against which she clasped her gown. I stayed perfectly still, not venturing to move or speak in case she should be off, but trying to let her understand that I was a friend. We stood looking at each other for a long moment. Then the girl came slowly across the brook, still fixing her eyes on mine, and drew near over the grass. It was a wary, yet not a timorous approach. When she was quite close she spoke, and her voice was a mere thread of sound.

'How did you get in?' she said.

'I came through the gate,' I answered. 'I opened it with an ash-key and came through.'

'But you are a mortal,' the quivering voice said. 'I can see you shining, but I am not afraid.'

'What should you fear?' I asked, amazed at her words and wondering how she, that was so bright, should speak of me as shining. And yet there was a dazzling happiness in my heart because I had found this place, and mingled with the delight was a strange sense of coming again to a remembered spot.

The maiden did not answer me, but drew a step nearer and looked up at me with eyes deeper and more full of lights and darks than the whole forest.

'Oh, stranger!' she said. 'You have come up through the woods. Oh, tell me, have you seen my child?'

'I have seen no one since I left the fields, a long seven miles away,' I answered. Her question was astonishing. She looked as young as the young parsley-stems that were only one summer long from root to bud. But when I said that I had seen no one in the woods, the saddest cloud of longing and disappointment veiled her eyes like a tear, though no tears rolled down her cheek.

She turned half-away from me towards the gate. Then she turned back and the cloud was gone.

'Why did you come here?' she said.

'I had to, when I saw the gate. How could I have stayed on the other side?'

'How could you know that the key was an ash-key?'

'I remembered it, somehow. I think I knew it when I was a little boy.'

'Did you? Are you glad you are here?'

'Glad beyond words. It is . . . it seems . . . almost like coming home.'

'But you are a mortal,' she said. 'I can see you. Only, I will stay near you, for the sake of my child . . . if I can.' And she suddenly fled away a few steps, then back at the same swiftness.

'Oh, yes, I will stay. Will you come with me?'

It was what I longed to do. Beautiful, bewildering, heart-breakingly lovely as this charmed woodland was, the maiden was still the rarest of all its rare delights. She was but one spirit among many; but where the beeches stood in noble steadfastness, she moved like a wandering star; where the stream spent its beauty in a million shattered, scattered sweeps and sparkles, her form was as supple as a breeze, but as finite as a flower. She led the way, with a gentle inviting movement, through the long grass and up between the trees.

Presently we came out on a crest of freshest turf where five great beeches grew. The grass was thick up to their very trunks and full of wild flowers. There, in the curd-white stitchwort and the lady-smock, the maiden sank down, and I stretched out near-by. Her eyes dwelt on mine, and I thought I could see in them trust and fear mingled together as the patterns of sky and shadow mingled upon the flow of her dark hair. At last she spoke.

'I do not understand how you came here. But when you go back to your own place will you carry with you a message from me? Maybe, as you are walking in the little fields, you may meet a stranger there, a growing boy, no taller than the corn. You will know him by his footfall, as light as footfall ever was. He is my child. Then will you tell him where you have been, what you have seen? And will you show him how to find the track up through the woods?'

'I will tell him.'

She wound her hands about her knees and looked away down the valley. 'It was cruel to take him from me. They wanted a human baby. Why should they meddle with these dangerous folk, half-earth, half-*something*?—I cannot say the name; only I see you shining through your frame of earth when I dare to look into you. It is strange that I should dare, but there is an essence in your blood that is like this'—and she plucked a blade of grass—'which makes me feel at one with you, in spite of all.'

'I feel it too,' I answered. 'Tell me.'

'You are in Faerie,' she said, suddenly turning to me and looking into my eyes. It was a beautiful and a terrible gaze. My heart seemed to slip from its safe perch and to struggle in darkness with tumultuous wings. I saw there, caught within manifold circling rings of colour and shade, the meaning and the promise of this place, the fulfilment of all my ancient and most fearful dreams of dreams. It was a half-unveiling, but I had known in my heart what was behind the veil.

'I know,' I answered slowly. 'You are——'

'A fay,' I was going to say. But she broke in:

'I am—nothing,' she said. 'I am the creature that is mortal: for me and for my kind death is the end, when the time comes. We are flames: a moment of beauty, then a cold wind and we are gone. We are not even as the trees, as the grass, as the stream, though we have something of their nature. There is no hope for us. And so we have more piercing joy or gladness than humans ever know, and so our sorrow is more deep and sore than a human heart could bear.'

She was silent. My spirit trembled with a thousand thoughts. The maiden's long-fingered hand was pressed upon her heart, not fiercely as though to shield a sharp and sudden wound, but wearily as if upon a deep pain, long endured, that never could be comforted.

'It was sorrow for me,' she said, 'when they took from me my boy, and sent him out of Faerie to be a changeling in the wide world.'

Again silence fell. The afternoon sun was sinking—at last, it seemed; for the short space since I had entered this country had somehow seemed hours upon hours, and the sun to have lingered in an enchanted dream across the lawny sky. Now he was quite gone. There, hanging in the paling west, was the sheerest slip of a new moon. One by one the blazing clouds were blown out and moved away gently down the sky to leave it clear for stars. And still we sat there, while the dew welled up around our feet.

A whisper fell across the air like a gossamer.

'But he will come back, and there will be again the wild and the glad and the long, long nights and days.'

A star fell. I stood up. I turned about and began to move eastward towards the gate that led out of the wood. A faint shape came beside me and slight fingers took hold of mine. Hand in hand we thridded the dark trees and crossed the lovely grass, lovelier now in its mantle of evening coolness and wild smell of rain. And there at last loomed the gate between its trees, the simple, perfect gate that had led to home, and more: to lost remembrance.

Here we paused. She laid her hand upon the lock.

'So you must go back?' she said mournfully.

'I must go back,' I answered.

'You will remember my message, will you not—if ever you should meet my child? I will light the lantern for him every night.'

'I shall remember it for ever.'

'You will come again?'

'I shall never come again.'

Then she opened the gate. I took those dearest hands in mine and laid my cheek upon them once more. I passed out, and the gate swung to behind me. And I ran and ran from my forgotten fairy mother down into the east, reckless through the bewildering trees, clasping my hard-won soul.

At last I stopped and looked back. High in the crest of the woods there shone a small, forlorn, yet steady light. To one far off it might have seemed a lantern set to light a traveller home. I fell upon my knees and wept as though my very heart was broken.

A SHEAF OF LETTERS FROM
JANE WELSH CARLYLE.

I.

To discover more letters from Jane Welsh Carlyle is a real find. A sheaf of them, numbering over a score, has come into my hands through the kindness of Mr. W. A. MacKnight, whose uncle, the late J. Y. MacKnight, was an old family friend and executor of Mrs. George Welsh (*née* Kisson), to whom, or to whose son, they are written. George was a younger brother of John Welsh, the Haddington doctor, Jane's father, eldest and most capable of a family of fourteen. His sisters come frequently into Jane's correspondence as the narrowly pious Welsh aunts. They lived to a green old age; but the brothers Robert and George, who come into the present tale, were short-lived, like so many of the Welshes, a consumptive family.

Mrs. George Welsh, who was born in 1803, survived till 1888. She was a woman of fine character, at once strong and gentle, bearing undeserved misfortune in quiet patience, serene and undismayed, without murmuring or recrimination against the authors of her misfortunes. Mrs. Carlyle had a great admiration for her, so different from Mrs. Robert Welsh, and for her son John, so different from Mrs. Robert's John, whose conceited behaviour and rudeness to the Carlyles and their distinguished guests have been immortalised by Jane's very efficient pen.

Mrs. George Welsh, we are told, was a very beautiful woman, of a Celtic family like her husband's, tracing descent back to the time of their migration from the Vale of Clwydd to Galloway, when Egbert took Chester. Widowed as she was in early life, she was left with two sons to educate, but twice over her money was cruelly misappropriated. The first time was by the trustee under her husband's will, who speculated with her funds and failed. This was just after the death of her younger son George, the more promising of her two clever sons, in 1840, at the age of thirteen; by hook and by crook, even going out herself as a governess, she managed to let her son John complete his education at Edinburgh University.

The second blow fell when Robert Welsh the lawyer, her brother-in-law, died insolvent in 1842. He had charge of the estate of John Welsh senior, late of Craigenputtock, Jane's paternal grandfather. Grandfather John, it should be remembered, had first to sell Nether

Craigenputtock in order to pay his sisters' portion, and finally, 'in the multitude of his family,' the main estate of Craigenputtock. This was bought by his eldest son, Jane's father, the flourishing doctor of Haddington. From this and from successful farming elsewhere the grandfather left a substantial fortune, but when he died in 1823, Jane's father being already dead, he was induced to divide his property between his other children, Jane's many aunts and uncles, leaving nothing to Jane herself, the sole representative of his eldest son.

It seems that the careful Robert had settled his share securely on his wife and children. There were no assets from which to pay Mrs. George her share, amounting to £1200, and Mrs. Robert, unblushingly careful of her own and her children's material interests, refused to part with any of her well-guarded share to make good her late husband's default. Mrs. Carlyle can but 'commit her to destiny,' while Mrs. George, rather than sully the name of Welsh by an appeal to the law, submitted to an honourable but laborious poverty, and continued patiently in the work that managed to support herself and her son.

These letters record how, long afterwards, when John Welsh was ill, the Carlyles sent him £50 to travel in search of health. From one of the occasional notes appended to the letters by Miss MacKnight, sister of Mrs. Welsh's executor, the reader is tempted to infer that Mrs. Carlyle made it easier for John to accept the gift by urging that it was a surplus of income from Craigenputtock, and therefore not alien money.

In addition to the varied personalia of these letters, there is a particular interest in marking the growth of Mrs. Carlyle's warm admiration and sympathy for her aunt, and the affection which both she and Carlyle so rapidly formed for her cousin John. With Jane's letters are kept several from Carlyle reporting the efforts he had made to interest influential people so as to find a place suitable for John's special abilities, for he was a mathematician of distinction. After vague hopes of official posts in the Surveying Department of New Zealand or in the Observatories at the Cape or Madras, John Welsh obtained a small astronomical post in Scotland. Eight years later he was appointed assistant and then superintendent of the Observatory at Kew, and in 1857 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Possibly, however, his early struggles had weakened his vitality; at all events, he fell a victim to consumption and died at Falmouth in 1859, at the age of thirty-five.

Furthermore, on nearly all the letters, the date of the year, regularly omitted by Mrs. Carlyle, has been written in by Miss MacKnight, a great help in setting about verification by cross-reference.

The first of these letters has twice been published, inexactly by Froude in his 'Life of Carlyle,' 1882, and accurately by Mr. Alexander Carlyle in the 'Love Letters of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh,' 1909. But it is well to reprint it here with the rest, both for its own deep interest, and for the sake of completing the correspondence and showing how early a strong friendship was established between Jane Welsh and her aunt.

The copy of it included in the present sheaf of letters was made by Miss MacKnight before the original went to Chelsea, where Carlyle was writing the Memoir of his wife. Mr. Alexander Carlyle, with characteristic kindness, has collated it with the original, now in his possession.

The letter was written shortly before the Carlyle marriage, which took place on October 17, 1826. Froude dates it September, the MS. copy October 10, the original October 1.

Templand, 1st Oct. (1826).

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—You must think me just about the most faithless character in the Nation; but I know, myself, that I am far from being so bad as I seem. The truth is, the many strange things I have had to do, and think of, in late months, left me no leisure of mind for writing mere complimentary letters: but still, you, as well as others of my friends, have not been remembered by me with the less kindness, that you have seen no *expression* of my remembrance on paper. So, pray do not go to entertain any hard thoughts of me, my good little Aunt; seeing that, at bottom, I deserve nothing but loving-kindness at your hands. Rather add a spice of long-suffering to your loving-kindness, which will make us the very best friends in the world.

It were no news to tell you what a momentous matter I have been busied with; 'not to know *that* would argue yourself unknown.' For a marriage is a topic suited to the capacities of all living; and in this, as in every other known instance, has been made the most of. But, for as much breath as has been wasted on '*my Situation*,' I have my own doubts whether they have given you any *right* idea of it. They would tell you, I should suppose, first and foremost, that my intended is *poor* (for *that* it requires no

great depth of sagacity to discover), and, in the next place, most likely, indulge in some criticisms scarce flattering on his birth (the more likely if their own birth happened to be mean or doubtful); and, if they happened to be vulgar-fine people with disputed pretensions to good looks, they would, to a certainty, set him down as unpolished and ill-looking. But a hundred chances to one, they would not tell you he is among the cleverest men of his day; and not the cleverest only, but the most enlightened! that he possesses all the qualities I deem essential in *my* husband—a warm true heart to love me, a towering intellect to command me, and a spirit of fire to be the guiding star—light¹ of my life. Excellence of this sort always requires some degree of superiority in those who duly appreciate it: in the eyes of the *canaille*—poor soulless wretches—it is mere foolishness, and it is only the *canaille* who babble about other people's affairs.

Such, then, is this future husband of mine; not a *great* man according to the most common sense of the word, but truly great in its natural proper sense; a scholar, poet, philosopher, 'a wise and noble man,' one who 'holds his patent of nobility from Almighty God,' and whose high stature of manhood is not to be measured by the inch-rule of Lilliputs! Will you like him? No matter whether you do or not—since *I* like him in the deepest part of my soul.

I would invite you to my wedding if I meant to invite any one; but to *my* taste such ceremonies cannot be *too* private: besides by making distinctions among my relatives on the occasion, I should be sure to give offence; and by God's blessing I will have no one there who does not feel kindly both to *him* and *me*.

I wished and purposed to have paid you a visit at Boreland beforehand.² But when it was convenient for me to go, Robert and his Wife were stumbling-blocks to my path;—and now the thing is impossible, the days that remain to me are so few, and so fully employed. My affectionate regards to my Uncle. A kiss to wee John. And believe me always

Your sincere friend and dutiful niece

JANE WELSH.

¹ This is the reading now suggested by Mr. Alexander Carlyle, with a long dash in place of the short dash from Mrs. Carlyle's pen, which looks like a hyphen. Star-light of my life' is impossible, and in the copy for press 'light' has been struck out, probably by Carlyle himself.

² 'Beforehand' has similarly been struck out as redundant.

The following is written after the death of George Welsh.

5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea,

20th September (1835).

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—Could I have hoped to give you any comfort by writing, I would not have delayed an instant after receiving your sister's letter: but I know by experience, that in heavy afflictions like that you are suffering; all that friends can say in the shape of comfort is of no earthly use, 'the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and the stranger intermeddleth not therewith.' Time, and new sources of interest and occupation, and the consciousness, above all, of having fitly done your part in the relation with my poor Uncle, will, I trust, restore your spirits; and in the meantime I feel it would be impertinent rather than kind to assail you with commonplaces of consolation.

For myself, the news of my Uncle's actual death hardly seemed to make him more lost to me than I have felt him to be ever since I left Scotland. He told me when we parted in Dumfries that he could not live to see me again; and I felt too certain at the moment that he was not deceiving himself: all I had heard of him, since, had made me rather wish for his release than given me the least hope of his restoration. My family is rapidly melting away from the face of this earth and the few of us who remain may look to follow the rest at no great distance. But a young generation is growing up to fill the gap. May they be healthier and every way better off than those who have gone before them!

Kiss your children for me; and believe, it will always give me a true gratification to hear of you and their well-being.

My Mother who is with me at present bids me offer you her sincere sympathy and kind regards. She received Miss Kissock's letter and would have written herself, if she had not had an opportunity of acknowledging it thro' me.

I had hoped to be in Scotland before this but we have been delayed by my Brotherinlaw's prolonged stay abroad till it is now too late in the season for me to undertake so laborious a journey. My Husband however still means to go down for a week or two shortly.

We find our present residence much more suitable than Craigenputtock was; nor do I think it more unhealthy: of late weeks indeed I have been a grievous invalid, but in general since I came to reside in London I have been much stronger than I used to be on that dismal hillside.

Remember me very kindly to your sister. My Husband unites with me in all good wishes for yourself and children.

Yours faithfully

JANE W. CARLYLE.

Five years later comes the death of little George, the boy of thirteen.

(January 1840.)

Alas dear Mrs. Welsh, it is strange as well as very sad that the only intercourse betwixt us for so many years should be made up of announcements of death and letters of condolence! From the bottom of my heart I pity you! left so young so good to bring up those fatherless boys—and now one of them taken from you just when your task was about ending, and its fruits might be look(ed) forward to with hope—I have heard nothing of your sons for a long time—but I well remember thinking the one you have lost a clever child and likely to grow up a clever man—and now!—God comfort you—no human comfort can be of any avail in such a case!

Write to me when you *can*, and tell me about the other, and yourself, and how this poor boy died.

This has been a dismal week with me—your intimation of death in my own kindred found me in the midst of death, which did not affect me in my personal affections, but has affected me deeply in my sympathies. The wife of a surgeon next door died after giving birth to a crippled infant and the poor husband nearly out of his wits ever since, with no woman about him except myself, not so much as a servant that could be of the smallest use to him—his old Mother is upwards of eighty and half insane—the poor child has a frightful prospect in life—if God spare it—for the Father has to go on the expedition to Africa from which he will probably never return.¹

To-day he is carrying away the body to be buried in Scotland her own country. If it were any consolation to think that others are suffering along with us, we should never want *that* in abundance but unfortunately it is none.

I shall be anxious to hear of you, yet do not constrain yourself to write, until you find it not irksome.

Ever affectionately yours

JANE CARLYLE.

¹ Presumably Capt. H. D. Trotter's expedition to the Niger, the start of which was delayed till May 1841. Nearly all concerned, as was expected, went down with fever.

The next letter belongs to the year 1842.

John Welsh is now eighteen. Mrs. Carlyle has just heard of the Robert Welshes' muddling away of the 'Craigenputtock moneys,' and Mrs. Robert's insistence on keeping all she has for the sake of her son, instead of honourably making restitution. 'That fearful February,' refers to Jane's great grief, the death of her mother in 1842.

Friday (Summer, 1842).

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—I have read your letter with the deepest interest—not a word of this 'ugly story,' as you may well call it, had reached me and I cannot express to you the astonishment and indignation it has filled me with—I always considered Mrs. Robert Welsh a cold and worldly-minded woman, but the very *prudence* which seemed to me to have outgrown in her all other good qualities, and to have rendered her almost *unamiable* in the conduct of her life, would have guarded her, I should have supposed, from such a flagrant transaction as this you tell me of. That the woman should not see that by throwing dishonour on her husband's memory, and making an act of downright dishonesty the basis of her own and her children's future fortunes, betokens a short-sightedness of intellect in her which surprises me, more than the abominable selfishness with which she pursues her own immediate advantage at all costs to others! Dear Mrs. Welsh whatever hardships this injustice may expose you to—depend upon it *your* John enters the world under better auspices than that other poor boy whom she seeks to advance by such unworthy means. I pity *him* more than I pity your son—the loss to your son is definite—so many hundred pounds—who knows but it may turn out a gain by the new stimulus it will give to his own exertions—but to John May the evil done is incalculable, and may spread itself over his whole existence—such a lesson in base worldliness given to him at such an age and by one whom he is bound to reverence,—and a stigma thrown on the name he bears!—Oh the blind Mother that she is! But as you say very dignifiedly and properly 'it is useless casting out reflections on her conduct'—to commit her to destiny is indeed all one can do with such a person—and destiny in its own good time will set that and whatever else is so glaringly wrong—to rights again one way or other. Meanwhile be assured that it would be a true satisfaction for me if my husband or I could in any way serve my young cousin—who besides being so related to me, is I

understand a well conducted clever youth. In the way you mention nothing I am afraid is possible for us—I know only one person connected with civil Engineers—George Rennie my old lover at Haddington, who is my cousin and brother-in-law to Sir John Rennie the great person here in that line. To him I wrote immediately on receiving your letter, and I shall enclose his answer that you may see the little hope he holds out—for next to having *possible* hopes realized I hold it best to have *impossible* ones at once set aside—to leave the ground clear for new schemes. I may add that I am *perfectly certain* that Mr. Rennie does not throw cold water on the subject from mere indisposition to give himself trouble about it. He would like nothing better than to do me a kindness for the sake of old times, if it lay at all within his ability.

My Cousin Jeanie who is here with me has a cousin in Liverpool—a practical engineer—and even he, she tells me has been obliged to dismiss a great many of his people lately—all trade is going so rapidly to perdition. But if a young man have talent, patience, and good conduct, never fear but he will make out for himself even in 'the present distressed state of the country' a respectable and useful existence. John has good gifts from nature, and he has the inestimable blessing of an affectionate and brave hearted Mother to sympathize in his struggles and encourage him on. It cannot be but that after so much hardship as you have had in life and borne so creditably *some fruits* of your cares and struggles should not arise to gladden you even here below.—Write to me whenever you see the shadow of a chance that my husband's influence may be of any help to you—tho' the present may offer nothing in which we can be of use it may not be always so.

Thank you for the kind letter you wrote to me a good while ago. I meant to answer it at the time, but my health and spirits have been so bad ever since that fearful February; that I am hardly to be accused for the many things I have left undone, above all the many letters I have left unanswered—I am stronger of late—but so sad always—and when I look forward to what they call 'the effects of time,' it seems to me as if these would be to deepen my sadness rather than clear it away.—I do not know how it is, but I feel as if something had *broken* within me, and however long I may live, that my mind can never recover its elasticity any more.

Pray take every care of *your* health—I know these sicknesses that come with vexations and know that no sicknesses need more

to be looked to. Give my cousinly regards to John, and believe me always

Affectionately yours

JANE CARLYLE.

Other letters follow, showing how much trouble Carlyle took upon himself to help young John in the further project of securing a post on the Survey in New Zealand. But official wheels move slowly; there is much need of patience, however eagerly the Carlyles push. Charles Buller, his old pupil, was consulted. He had both knowledge and influence in matters Colonial, having been Secretary to the Board of Control.

5 Cheyne Row,

Friday (1842).

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—I write today merely to say that I will write again so soon as I have anything to tell you of what you naturally wish to know. But it will take some time even to get answers to the questions you ask—so you must not grow impatient and fancy that we are neglecting the business.

My husband has already made two long journeys about it with almost no result. The first day he found Mr. Buller absent, the second time he was at home but entirely ignorant as to the *when* and *how* of this particular branch of New Zealand business. He was quite ready however to bestir himself in getting the necessary information, and also to use his interest in behalf of any friend of Carlyle's. He promised to go forthwith to the Secretary a Mr. Ward and ask him all about it—and write to my husband the result of his enquiries—but all sorts of business I observe get on here very slowly and unsatisfactorily by writing; so my husband will have to go to him again I imagine—and perhaps to the secretary also—and perhaps several times, before any good is done. Be assured, however, that you will not have to wait a day thro' any remissness on our part—and that is all the satisfaction I can give you at present. . . .

But the Colonial project had no solid outcome and by way of 'very mortifying negating news,' Rennie himself, it was discovered, was only pushing a new New Zealand Company, for which he wanted a Surveyor. Carlyle's journeys, interviews, letters were wasted. Mrs. Carlyle writes from Ixworth, where she was spending August and September with the parents of Charles Buller:

I feel so annoyed at the upshot or probable upshot of our New Zealand speculation that I hardly can put it in words : so I forward a part of my Husband's last letter to me, with a note from Mr. C. Buller, to tell their own story. I distinctly think with Carlyle that any adventure which George Rennie is at the head of would need 'to be looked at on both sides' before connecting John with it—George Rennie, tho' a clever and enterprising man, has some want of *perseverance* or other want in him which hinders his *ever* succeeding in any business he undertakes, besides I do not like his principles of action which are all for his own vulgar aggrandisement—Hang him anyhow for having so misled me in the present case!—to have heard the decided way in which he talked no one would have suspected any more than myself that he was talking either without full knowledge or with wilful mystification. Carlyle says 'exhort you to patience'—I fancy you are better at practising patience than I am at merely preaching it. One thing be sure of ; that we shall be constantly on the outlook for some situation for John until he be fairly employed. Surely among our many friends in *authority*, some one may be found to give him a helping hand.

However, another opening was found. Through Principal Forbes, he was engaged by Sir Thomas Makdougall-Brisbane as an observer at his magnetic and meteorological observatory at Makers-toun, where he remained nearly eight years, though the pay was but small. Then in 1850 he moved to Kew as assistant at the Observatory to Sir Francis Ronalds, whom he succeeded as Superintendent in 1852. It was only on his coming to London in 1850 that he made real acquaintance with the Carlyles.

The good news of the Makerstoun appointment acted as a tonic on Mrs. Carlyle, and elicited the following letter, simply dated 'Friday,' but, to judge from the reference to Dr. John Carlyle's prescriptions, it must have been written towards the end of November 1842.

Late November 1842.

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—Your letter came yesterday at an excellent moment!—I was sitting all alone here—with my feet on the fender—more unwell than usual—and horribly sad—not knowing the least in the world what to do with my life—even for that one day—something that should take me *out of myself* was the one thing I needed—and *found* in the good news of your letter. There

is after all a strange truth in what is called *the force of blood*—I can hardly be said ever to have seen this young man—for now that he is filling such a manly function; we must not call him *boy* any longer—and yet I felt this piece of good fortune which has befallen him quite as a kindness of Providence towards *myself*, and with a warmth of gladness which I am sure I could not have *got up* at that moment, had it been announced to me that my most intimate friend, not a *cousin* or otherwise *related* to me in nature, had been made prime minister!—It is not so much the employment, the salary, the practice which it offers him in the meanwhile, nor yet the prospects of promotion, according to his turn of mind, which it opens to him hereafter, that delights me in this appointment; but it is the indubitable testimony to his character and capacity which lies in it, and from those who have had the best opportunities of judging of him. *Success* in this world does not always follow from having deserved to succeed—but the man who has deserved to succeed *can do either way*—his well-wishers need fear no particular anxiety about the result—And so I recommend him to Providence and to *himself*, with my blessing.

I do not get strong at all, which is a pity more for others than for myself—One has no business to lament that one has not strength to do this and that, so long as one does not do all that is possible with the strength one *has*.—It were just as rational to complain that one has not a thousand a year, while one keeps a hundred lying, at no interest—My Brother-in-law tells me that I shall probably be better in a month; when I shall have swallowed heaven knows how many more blue-pills, for a pain in my side that has plagued me all the last year—May be so! Meanwhile I am not confined to the house, but walk a little every day the weather being most mild—unnaturally so. Pray give my kind regards to my Aunts. I will write to Anne one of these days.

With affectionate wishes for yourself and John, believe me ever dear Mrs. Welsh

Very sincerely yours

JANE W. CARLYLE.

In 1844 another misfortune befalls Mrs. Welsh. Though John is just able to maintain himself, she has to go out into the world once more and seek a livelihood. Mrs. Carlyle writes as soon as she finds some practical possibility to add to mere words of sympathy. There is an opening in a school, but the question of health

and strength arises over and above the peculiar strain inflicted upon women who after a sheltered life are driven into places of dependence or of work to which they are unused.

1844.

Thursday,
5 Cheyne Row.

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—When my husband, on returning from Scotland told me the new misfortune which had befallen you, my first movement was to write to you immediately; but when I considered what it was that I had to write—merely regrets and condolences—affording no sort of comfort beyond that which I trusted you had already, the assurance namely of my interest in you; I felt that I could write to you better when besides the expression of my sympathy, I might add some suggestion or hope about your future which had any practical help in it.

Mr. Gordon had mentioned some situation which he thought it likely might be procured for you, and in which you might gain, without too much difficulty, a respectable livelihood, so long as the hard necessity of earning your own livelihood was imposed on you (which we trust will not be for long—till John has found his footing in the world). I would wait to see what came of this—whether Mr. Gordon could make his suggestion into a distinct proposal—would meanwhile urge him to all zeal on your behalf—and if the result proved favourable there would then be some use in saying: ‘My dear Mrs. Welsh I am horribly grieved for you,’ when I could follow it up with: ‘but here is at least one resource open to you against the present pressure of difficulty.’

Now however comes a letter from Mr. Gordon in which he tells me that he hears from my aunts that ‘in your present state of health you fear to venture on the labours of a school,’ and I hasten to beg that you will tell me yourself how it is with you—whether you be suffering from any positive ailment or only from that general feeling of *unwellness* which is with most of us the inevitable consequence of anxiety or distress of mind—and whether you have any outlook which you find to be *as possible and more promising* than this which we thought of for you. Alas alas, for a woman unused *from the beginning to work* for her subsistence there is no *easy* work to be found: it may not be always *physically* hard but physically or morally she is sure to find it hard enough—too hard—in whatever shape it comes to her—look at what *seems* to be the *easiest* of all

employments—companion to a rich Lady—where all one's material wants are provided for—and no actual labour required—a little observation may soon convince one that even *that* is no *easy work*—that the *soul* is quite sufficiently taxed to overbalance the exemptions of the body—I see women here, who had been born to independence, fulfilling that vocation under one would say the most favourable circumstances, and I declare to heaven that I would rather keep a school—follow any sort of laborious employment in honesty—and call my soul my own, than live the most do-nothing luxurious existence, but with my soul thus put at the disposition of other people—Tell me however what you think—what your purpose—if indeed the stunned condition in which such an unexpected blow must have left you has yet allowed you to mature any passing idea into a purpose. I have much desire to be of use to you—little power—but that little will be exerted to the uttermost, if I once knew in what direction to exert it with any possibility of success. God give you comfort—for you need it, poor soul—your life has been a hard one. You have always however the consolation of knowing that it is not thro' fault of *yours* that it has been so hard—it is a cruel aggravation of suffering to feel that one has brought it on oneself.

Ever affectionately yours

JANE CARLYLE.

Give my kind love to my aunts.

Another letter, from internal evidence clearly dating from the summer of 1844, is characteristic both of Mrs. Carlyle's intuitions and of her highly strung surroundings. Mrs. Welsh was at this time teaching in a clergyman's family at Cullen in Tipperary.

5 Cheyne Row,
Friday.

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—There is a sort of fatality about your letters; the one you wrote to me from Leith came as I was in the very act of pronouncing your name. I was just expressing my annoyance to my husband that my Aunt Anne whom I had written to about you would not take any notice of my letter (nor has she taken any notice of it to this hour); the *first* you wrote to me from Ireland came when I had been *dreaming* about you over night—and the last came half an hour after I had been regretting to Carlyle, that I did not know your address (supposing that you had

gone to the other place) that I might have written to ask how you were going on ; as I was become quite anxious to know. Thank you for being in such a thorough state of *sympathy with* me, as to to be able to anticipate or rather to *divine* my wishes, and thank Providence that you have such good news of yourself to send. There are some precious people in this world who contrive wonderfully to *make* good news where others would find only *bad* or *indifferent* news—and *you* it seems to me are one of these blessings to the community.

In return for the kindness these good people show you I feel tempted to wish, ungratefully enough, that their child might *never turn older* ! But older he will certainly turn in spite of my unchristian wishes—so that for compensation we must just consider that your own son will also turn older, and that when the one no longer requires your care the other may be able to offer you his.

It is a great comfort for you always to have a son who *deserves* to prosper in the world, let the prosperity come when it may !

For ourselves, we are going on much after the old fashion—Carlyle as busy as busy can be over his book about Cromwell which for all that he works at it like a house on fire is still a long way from *done*—myself transacting the usual amount of headaches, colds, etc. but nothing material ailing me—quite well enough for all practical purposes—at least for all such as I ever dream of turning myself to. I have been greatly vexed lately with one after another of my acquaintance *going mad*—One would say that I did not *choose* my acquaintance very discreetly since such an issue becomes *frequent*—but really there seems to be madness in the air just now which no stock of sense to start with can always resist. A very intimate Friend has just been here since I began to write, telling me that he has had to lock up his wife in two rooms, she having been running about like a wild cat flinging the poker at people and things. This one however in losing *her* wits has sustained no great loss for they were never anything to speak of.

I never hear a word from my Aunts—it seems they can only write *sermons*, to save my soul—as my soul prefers to shift for itself independent of *their* preaching they have entirely disowned the relationship. The more pity *for themselves* I think—God be with you—let me hear of you again before long and believe always

Affectionately yours,

J. CARLYLE.

The following fragment may be placed here at a guess.

... again—since Anne had taken no notice of my enquiries about you. So I had to write first to Manchester—to have the note sent back and all that has put off time.

God be with you my dear friend and strengthen your mind and body for what you are required to bear which nobody can say is little! Tell me of John—what his actual position is and if he have any prospect beyond. If *he* were but established in the world it would be all well with *you* again I am sure—for such a good boy as he has always been cannot fail to show himself, so soon as ever he has the power, a kind and generous son to a Mother who has made such exertions for *him*.

Be sure you write to me soon. And try to *hope*—I know as well as anyone how difficult *that* is under certain circumstances—but if one can by any means accomplish it there is no quality that carries one so far! Again God bless you.

Affectionately yours,

JANE CARLYLE.

Mrs. Welsh is still in Ireland.

Monday (Spring 1846).

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH,—Curiously enough the thought you impute to me; 'what mishap has befallen her now' was *the very* thought that passed thro' my mind in opening your letter: but without reference to *you* the least in the world! the idea of any new sorrow having happened to *you* would have put itself into some kinder words. The fact is, your handwriting is very similar to that of a German friend of mine, here in London, from whom I hardly ever receive a note except to tell me something has gone wrong with her—thro' the cruelty of Destiny as *she* thinks—thro' her own want of patience and commonsense say others. Accordingly when I came to the words 'only unqualified good to tell of' and 'quite naturalized in this family' I stopt in astonishment and said to myself; 'Miss Bölte must be *going to die*!' nothing short of what we call 'fee' in Scotland, could have made *her* sensible of any 'good' in her lot, or satisfied with people's treatment of her—(She is a Governess this Miss Bölte—much esteemed in every family she has lived in—but too *exact*ing ever to be content with the best treatment that one can get *in a conditional* World)—

Then my eye lighted on the date—and the puzzle was cleared up at once!—for it was just as *like you* as it was *unlike her* to make the best of things—and to get the better of Destiny by a patient, hopeful, loving heart. Oh yes my dear friend you *have much* to be thankful for! thro' all your troubles which might have saddened and embittered many a one, so as to have destroyed all her future comfort and usefulness in life, *you have not lost but gained*, in all that is most essential in life! When I think of you as I first knew you—a pretty gentle girl, but without any apparent capability for getting thro' the world, otherwise than by the help of others and the favour of a mild Destiny, and compare you as you were then with what I see you now—a thoughtful, quietly courageous, cheerfully and lovingly struggling *woman*, I can hardly regret for you the stern trials which have been the means of working this advancement. Not that I give all the credit of your present manner of being to *Misfortune*!—had the good qualities not *lain in you* even misfortune could not have developed them—we see plenty of people from whom trials seem only to take away the little strength they had to begin with—But had you been left to lead a tolerably easy life with my poor uncle—carried along by *him*, instead of having him to nurse and comfort and then to supply his place to helpless children—had you even never known the harassing cares of downright poverty—and been forced to look into your own soul to see what possible help lay *there*—and into the soul of what one calls *Society* to see how *there*, no help lies except for those who can help themselves—if all that had not been, I doubt if you would ever have grown into the estimable woman which all your late letters to me prove you to be. One thing I especially love you for—the way in which you speak—or rather—do *not* speak of Mrs. Robert!—the bitterest expressions respecting that woman would have been excusable from you—but how much better is your silence!—When one can so bear injustice, one is in a manner proof against injustice. I fear the money-advantages she has endeavoured to secure for her children will be sorely counterbalanced by the taint of dishonour they are coupled with, and by the example of a self-seeking unjust Mother. Her eldest son John showed himself to me last spring—and until I am pretty well assured of his having *entirely altered his figure* will never be seen—willingly—by me again!—He wrote me a most flourishing letter, all about 'natural affection' and that sort of thing—concluding with an intimation that he intended shortly to be in London

or a few days and hoped to be permitted to *renew* our acquaintance—commenced at four years old on *his* side.

Tho' my Husband's extreme occupation at the time, as well as the quiet and regular habits of a studious man's house were against my receiving a young, and *probably restless* and *certainly sight-seeing* stranger into it, I nevertheless let myself be seduced by his professions of 'natural affection'; and urging on myself that if he was his Mother's son he was also his Father's and my Uncle's, I wrote inviting him to occupy my spare room during his stay—a position instantly accepted in a style that showed me the former letter had been written with no other motive but to provide himself a lodging free of expense—He arrived in due course—I was horribly agitated in the first moment of seeing him—so many old thoughts hung on him! but the first five minutes satisfied me that I had found no *cousin* here except in name. In fact one stood amazed before the obtuse assurance and barefaced egoism of that boy! He contradicted my husband—*lectured* him even, as if he had been the Angel Gabriel come amongst us! all my visitors he tried a wrestle at accursed Edinb. Logic with—whilst *they* were wondering at what ignorant savage I had picked up!—The *wittiest* and most high-bred woman of her time—a woman who is a sort of queen in London society—and *deservedly*—the Lady Harriet Baring—coming to tea one evening—was *put to rights* at every word—one might say *bullied* by this presumptuous youth as if she had had no more sense than a clucking hen! He staid *three weeks*! keeping me sitting up at nights for him till two and three in the morning—rushing out and in without regard to anyone's convenience but his own—and finally took himself off—leaving me privately determined never to suffer him to sleep under my roof again thro' all eternity.

We are going on here much as usual—my husband busy over the 2nd edition of his *Cromwell*—and I doing the best I can in a state of health that never can be called good—This winter however I have avoided colds—partly from the mildness of the season and partly from having been out of London during November and December our most trying months—we were staying opposite the Isle of Wight at a beautiful place close on the Sea—with that same Lady Harriet Baring whom John Welsh *amused* beyond all the *savage animals* that she had ever seen! I went to Liverpool in July and remained till September at another sea place—Seaforth House—six miles from Liverpool with a Mrs. Paulet who is one of

my dearest friends. *Now*, I hope we shall be stationary a while—for I cannot get used at all to the London fashion. . . .

Is there any *town* near you where booksellers send magazine-parcels from London! Mr. Carlyle was wishing to send you his *Past and Present* and could get it conveyed to Dublin in the beginning of the month free of expense but how would it reach you after?

My kinds regards to *your* John when you write—I hope when I *see him* I will not find it *no go* as with my other cousin.

(The bottom of the page with her signature has been cut off.)

LEONARD HUXLEY.

(*To be continued.*)

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 44.

(*The Fourth of the Series.*)

'I say it is the moon that shines so bright.'

'I know it is the sun that shines so bright.'

1. 'Thou feeble, wanton, foolish, fickle thing!
Whom nought can frighten, sadden, or abash.'
2. 'They stop, and look, and something say,
And to —— ask the way.'
3. 'He fought, resolved to snatch the shield of death
And shelter him from shame.'
4. 'His ideas succeeded each other with the gentle but uninter-
mitting flow of a plentiful and bounteous spring.'
5. 'You are still very beautiful, but I advise you to accept
the first offer that's made to you.'
6. 'I'm now no more than a mere lodger in my own house.'
7. 'He cursed his son, and he cursed himself.'
8. 'I think that all the world are grown anonymous,
Since no one cares to tell me what he's called.'
9. 'Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page xii of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.

5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.

6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

7. Answers to Acrostic No. 44 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than October 20.

ANSWER TO No. 43.

1.	F	oa	M
2.	O	weene	E
3.	R	obi	N
4.	G	onzal	O
5.	E	nchan	T
6.	T	hame	S

PROEM: Tennyson, *The Brook*.

LIGHTS:

1. Shelley, *Hymn of Apollo*.
2. Longfellow, *Hiawatha*, xii.
3. Barham, *The Ingoldsby Legends*
The Witches' Frolic.
4. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ii., 1.
5. Lowell, *Under the Willows*.
6. Gray, *Ode on a Distant Prospect*
of Eton College.

Acrostic No. 42 ('Tasso Dante'): An acrostic based entirely on *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* is necessarily easy of solution. This one presented no difficulty, and appears to have provided a satisfactory holiday task. Correct answers came from 177 solvers, one answer was incorrect, and there were two that infringed the rules.

The first correct answer that was opened came from 'Girlic,' who wins the monthly prize. Miss G. Miller, Wilton Lodge, Wendover Road, Staines, Surrey, will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

RESULT OF THE TENTH SERIES.

The Extra Acrostic ('Mavis Merle') was set for nine competitors, and eight of them sent in answers. No one located the Lytton quotation, and only one solver knew 'Vandeleur'; the other lights presented less difficulty. The scores were:—Penthemeron, Square, and Wynell, 5; Bimbo, Hazel, Oiseau, and Sabrina, 4; Yoko, 3. The first three, who scored five points, win the book prizes, and will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. The other prizes are allotted in accordance with the announcement in the August number: Edumis wins twenty-five shillings, Riceyman and Ubique one pound each. The six winners can take no prize in the current (eleventh) series.

Edumis is Mr. S. B. Relton, Crowthorne, Berks; Riceyman is Mr. W. W. How, 21 Merton Street, Oxford; Ubique is Major Luard, 14 Woodlane, Falmouth; Penthemeron is Miss Wait, 2 College Road, Clifton, Bristol; Square is Mrs. Carré, Coombe Cote, Sanderstead, Surrey; Wynell is Mr. E. W. M. Lloyd, Hartford House, Hartley Wintney, Hants.

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